REFLECTIONS

ON THE

ORIGINS AND DESTINY OF IMPERIAL BRITAIN



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OF

IMPERIAL BRITAIN

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αὐτὸ γὰρ τὸ παράδοξον τῶν πράξεων, ὑπὲρ ὧν προῃρήμεθα γράφειν, ἱκανόν ἐστι προκαλέσασθαι καὶ παρορμῆσαι πάντα καὶ νέον καὶ πρεσβύτερον πρὸς τὴν ἔντευξιν τῆς πραγματείας. τίς γὰρ οὕτως ὑπάρχει φαῦλος ἢ ῥᾴθυμος ἀνθρώπων ὃς οὐκ ἂν βούλοιτο γνῶναι πῶς καὶ τίνι γένει πολιτείας ἐπικρατηθέντα σχεδὸν ἅπαντα τὰ κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην ὑπὸ μίαν ἀρχὴν ἔπεσε τὴν Ῥωμαίων, ὃ πρότερον οὐχ εὑρίσκεται γεγονός; τίς δὲ πάλιν οὕτως ἐκπαθὴς πρός τι τῶν ἄλλων θεαμάτων ἢ μαθημάτων ὃς προυργιαίτερον ἄν τι ποιήσαιτο τῆσδε τῆς ἐμπειρίας; POLYBIUS.

"For the noveltie and strangenesse of the matter which I determine and deliberate to entreat upon, is of efficacie and force enough to draw the mindes both of young and olde to the diligent reading and digesting of these labours. For what man is there so despising knowledge, or any so idle and slothfull to be found, which will eschew or avoide by what policies or by what kinde of government the most part of nations in the universall world were vanquished, subdued and made subject unto the one empire of the Romanes, which before that time was never seen or heard? Or who is there that hath such earnest affection to other discipline or studie, that he suposeth any kind of knowledge to be of more value or worthy to be esteemed before this?"

The Histories of the most famous Chronographer, POLYBIUS.
(Englished by C. W., and imprinted at London, Anno 1568.)

PREFACE

THE following pages form part of the more theoretic sections of a larger work, *The Origins of Imperial Britain*, upon which the writer has been for a considerable period engaged; but as the completion of that work is still at a distance, he has been induced to publish these "Reflections" by the belief or the hope that at the present grave crisis they may not be without service to his country.

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PART I

THE TESTIMONY OF THE PAST

LECTURE I

WHAT IS IMPERIALISM?

[Tuesday, 8th May 1900.]

THE present age has rewritten the annals of the world, and set its own impress on the traditions of humanity. In no period has the burden of the past weighed so heavily upon the present, or the interpretation of its speculative import troubled the heart so profoundly, so intimately, so monotonously.

How remote we stand from the times when Raleigh could sit down in the Tower, and with less anxiety about his documents, State records, or stone monuments than would now be imperative in compiling the history of a county, proceed to write the History of the World! And in speculation it is the Tale, the *fabula*, the procession of impressive incidents and personages, which enthralls him, and with

perfect fitness he closes his work with the noblest Invocation to Death that literature possesses. But beneath the variety or pathos of the Tale, the present age ever apprehends a deeper meaning, or is oppressed by a sense of mystery, of wonder, or of sorrow unrevealed, which defies tears.

This revolution in our conception of History, this boundless industry which in Germany, France, England, Italy, has led to the printing of mountains of forgotten memoirs, correspondences, State papers, this endless sifting of evidence, this treasuring above riches of the slight results slowly and patiently drawn, is neither accident, nor transient caprice, nor antiquarian frenzy, but a phase of the guiding impulse, the supreme instinct of this age—the ardour to know all, to experience all, to be all, to suffer all, in a word, to know the Truth of things—if haply there come with it immortal life, even if there come with it silence and utter death. The deepened significance of history springs thus from the deepened significance of life, and the passion of our interest in the past from the passion of our interest in the present. The half-effaced image on a

coin, the illuminated margin of a mediæval manuscript, the smile on a fading picture—if these have become, as it were, fountains of unstable reveries, perpetuating the Wonder which is greater than Knowledge, it is a power from the present that invests them with this magic! Life has become more self-conscious; not of the narrow self merely, but of that deeper Self, the mystic Presence which works behind the veil.

World-history is no more the fairy tale whose end is death, but laden with eternal meanings, significances, intimations, swift gleams of the Timeless manifesting itself in Time. And the distinguishing function of History as a science lies in its ceaseless effort not only to lay bare, to crystallise the moments of all these manifestations, but to discover their connecting bond, the ties that unite them to each other and to the One, the hidden source of these varied manifestations, whether revealed as transcendent thought, art, or action.

Hence, as in prosecuting elsewhere our inquiry into the origin of the French Monarchy or the decline of oligarchic Venice, we examined not only the characters, incidents, policies

immediately connected with the subject, but attempted an answer to the question—What is the place of these incidents in the universal scheme of things? so in the treatment of the theme now before us, the origins of Imperial Britain, pursuing a similar plan, we have to consider not merely the relations of Imperial Britain to the England and Scotland of earlier times, but its relations to mediæval Europe, and to determine so far as is possible its place amongst the world-empires of the past. I use the phrase "Imperial Britain," and not "British Empire," because from the latter, territorial associations are inseparable. It designates India, Canada, Egypt, and the like. But by "Imperial Britain" I wish to indicate the informing spirit, the unseen force from within the race itself, which in the past has shapen and in the present continues to shape this outward, this material frame of empire. With the rise of this spirit, this consciousness within the British race of its destiny as an imperial people, no event in recent history can fitly be compared. The unity of Germany under the Hohenzollern is an imposing, a far-reaching achievement. The aspirations of the period of the

Aufklärung—Lessing, Schiller, Arndt, and Fichte—find in this edifice their political realisation. But the incident is not unprecedented. Even the writings of Friedrich Gentz are not by it made obsolete. It has affected the European State-system as the sudden unity of Spain under Ferdinand or the completion of the French Monarchy under Louis XIV. affected it. But in this unobserved, this silent growth of Imperial Britain—so unobserved that it presents itself even now as an unreal, a transient thing—a force intrudes into the State-systems of the world which, whether we view it in its effects upon the present age or seek to gauge its significance to the future, has few, if any, parallels in history.

§ I. THE UNCONSCIOUS AND THE CONSCIOUS IN HISTORY

What is the nature of this Consciousness? What is its historical basis? Is it possible to trace the process by which it has emerged?

In the history of every conscious organism, a race, a state, or an individual, there is a certain moment when the Unconscious desire,

purpose, or ideal passes into the Conscious. Life's end is then manifest. The ideal unsuspected hitherto, or dimly discerned, now becomes the fixed law of existence. Such moments inevitably are difficult to localise. Bonaparte in 1793 fascinates the younger Robespierre—"He has so much of the future in his mind." But it is neither Toulon, nor Vendémiaire, nor Lodi, but the marshes of Arcola, two years after Robespierre has fallen on the scaffold, that reveal Napoleon to himself. So Diderot perceives the true bent of Rousseau's genius long before the Dijon essay reveals it to the latter himself and to France. Polybius discovers in the war of Regulus and of Mylæ the beginning of Rome's imperial career, but a juster instinct leads Livy to devote his most splendid paragraphs to the heroism in defeat of Thrasymene and Cannæ. It was the singular fate of Camoens to voice the ideal of his race, to witness its glory, and to survive its fall. The prose of Osorius[1] does but prolong

[1] The Latin work of Osorius, *De rebus gestis Emmanuelis regis Lusitaniae*, appeared in 1574, two years later than *Os Lusiadas*. The twelve books of Osorius cover the twenty-six years between 1495 and 1521, thus traversing parts of the same ground as Camoens. But the hero of Osorius is Alboquerque. His affectation of Ciceronianism, the

the echoes of Camoens' mighty line. Within a single generation, Portugal traces the bounds of a world-empire, great and impressive; the next can hardly discover the traces. But to the limning of that sketch all the past of Portugal was necessary, though then it passed for the first time from the Unconscious to the Conscious. Similarly in the England of the seventeenth century the conscious deliberate resolve to be itself the master of its fate takes complete possession of the nation. This is the ideal which gives essential meaning to the Petition of Right, to the Grand Remonstrance, to the return at the Restoration to the "principles of 1640"; it is this which gives a common purpose to the lives of Eliot, Pym, Shaftesbury, and Somers. It is the unifying motive of the politics of the whole seventeenth century. The eighteenth expands or curtails this, but originates nothing. An ideal from the past controls the genius of the greatest statesmen of the eighteenth century. But from the

literary vice of the age, casts a suspicion upon the sincerity of many of his epithets and paragraphs, yet the work as a whole is composed with his eyes upon his subject. Seven years after the Latin, a French translation, a beautifully printed folio from Estienne's press, was published, containing eight additional books, by Lopez de Castanedo and others, bringing the history down to 1529.

closing years of the century to the present hour another ideal, at first existing unperceived side by side with the former, has slowly but insensibly advanced, obscure in its origins and little regarded in its first developments, but now impressing the whole earth by its majesty—the Ideal of Imperial Britain.

It is vain or misleading for the most part to fix precisely the first beginnings of great movements in history. Nevertheless it is often convenient to select for special study even arbitrarily some incident or character in which that movement first conspicuously displays itself. And if the question were asked—When does monarchical or constitutional England first distinctively pass into Imperial Britain? I should point to the close of the eighteenth century, to the heroic patience with which the twenty-two years' war against France was borne, hard upon the disaster of Yorktown and the loss of an empire, and further, if you proceeded to search in speculative politics or actual speeches for a deliberate expression of this transition, I should select as a conspicuous instance Edmund Burke's great impeachment of Warren Hastings. There this

first awakening consciousness of an Imperial destiny declares itself in a very dramatic and pronounced form indeed. Yet Burke's range in speculative politics, compared with that of such a writer as Montesquieu, is narrow. His conception of history at its highest is but an anticipation of the picturesque but pragmatic school of which Macaulay is coryphæus. In religion he revered the traditions, and acquiesced in the commonplaces of his time. His literary sympathies were less varied, his taste less sure than those of Charles James Fox. In constitutional politics he clung obstinately to the ideals of the past; to Parliamentary reform he was hostile or indifferent. As Pitt was the first great statesman of the nineteenth century, so Burke was the last of the great statesmen of the seventeenth century,—for it is to the era of Pym and of Shaftesbury that, in his constitutional theories, Burke strictly belongs. But if his range was narrow, he is master there. "Within that circle none durst walk but he." No cause in world-history has inspired a nobler rhetoric, a mightier language. And if he is a reactionary in constitutional politics, in his impeachment of Hastings he is

the prophet of a new era, the annunciator of an ideal which the later nineteenth century slowly endeavours to realise—an empire resting not on violence, but on justice and freedom.

This ideal influences the action, the policy of statesmen earlier in the century; but in Chatham its precise character, that which differentiates the ideal of Britain from that, say, of Rome, is less clear than in Burke. And in the seventeenth century, unless in a latent *unconscious* form, it can hardly be traced at all. In the speculative politics of that century we encounter it again and again; but in practical politics it has no part. I could not agree with Lord Rosebery when in an address the other day he spoke of Cromwell as "a great Briton." Cromwell is a great Englishman, but neither in his actions nor in his policy, neither in his letters, nor in any recorded utterance, public or private, does he evince definite sympathy with, or clear consciousness of the distinctive ideal of Imperial Britain. His work indeed leads towards this end, as the work of Raleigh, of the elder Essex, or of Grenville, leads towards it, but not consciously, not deliberately.

'In Burke, however, and in his younger contemporaries, the conscious influence, the formative power of a higher ideal, of wider aspirations than moulded the actual statesmanship of the past, can no longer escape us. The Empire is being formed, its material bounds marked out, here definitely, there lost in receding vistas. On the battlefield or in the senate-house, or at the counter of merchant adventurers, this work is slowly elaborating itself. And within the nation at large the ideal which is to be the spirit, the life of the Empire is rising into ever clearer consciousness. Its influence throws a light upon the last speeches of the younger Pitt. If the Impeachment be Burke's *chef d'œuvre*, Pitt never reached a mightier close than in the speech which ended as the first grey light touched the eastern windows of Westminster, suggesting on the instant one of the happiest and most pathetic quotations ever made within those walls.[2] The

[2] The first of Pitt's two remarkable speeches in the great debate of April 1792 on the Abolition of the Slave-trade was made on 2nd April. Pitt, according to a pamphlet report printed by Phillips immediately afterwards, rose after an all-night sitting to speak at four o'clock on Tuesday morning (3rd April). The close of the speech is thus reported :—"If we listen to the voice of reason and duty, and pursue this night the line of conduct which they prescribe, some of us may

ideal makes great the life of Wilberforce; it exalts Canning; and Clarkson, Romilly, Cobbett, Bentham is each in his way its exponent. "The Cry of the Children" derived an added poignancy from the wider pity which, after errors and failures more terrible than crimes, extended itself to the suffering in the Indian

live to see a reverse of that picture, from which we now turn our eyes with pain and regret. We may live to behold the natives of Africa engaged in the calm occupations of industry, in the pursuits of a just and legitimate commerce. We may behold the beams of science and philosophy breaking in upon their land, which at some happy period in still later times may blaze with full lustre, and joining their influence to that of pure religion, may illumine and invigorate the most distant extremities of that immense continent. Then may we hope that even Africa, though last of all the quarters of the globe, shall enjoy at length, in the evening of her days, those blessings which have descended so plentifully upon us in a much earlier period of the world. Then also will Europe, participating in her improvements and prosperity, receive an ample recompense for the tardy kindness (if kindness it can be called) of no longer hindering that continent from extricating herself out of the darkness which in other more fortunate regions has been so much more speedily dispelled—

Non primus equis oriens afflavit anhelis,
illic sera rubens accendit lumina Vesper.

Then, Sir, may be applied to Africa those words, originally indeed used with a different view—

His demum exactis—
devenere locos laetos, et amoena vireta
fortunatorum nemorum, sedesque beatas;
largior hic campos aether, et lumine vestit
purpureo."

Pitt's second speech, of which only a brief impassioned fragment remains, was delivered on 27th April (*Parl. Hist.* xxix. pp. 1134-88).

village, in the African forest, or by the Nile. The Chartist demanded the Rights of Englishmen, and found the strength of his demand not diminished, but heightened, by the elder battle-cry of the "Rights of Man." Thus has this ideal, grown conscious, gradually penetrated every phase of our public life. It removes the disabilities of religion; enfranchises the millions, that they by being free may bring freedom to others. In the great renunciation of 1846 it borrows a page from Roman annals, and sets the name of Peel with that of Caius Gracchus. It imparts to modern politics an inspiration and a high-erected effort, the power to falter at no sacrifice, dread no responsibility.

Thus, then, as in the seventeenth century the ideal of national and constituted freedom takes complete possession of the English people, so in the nineteenth this ideal of Imperial Britain, risen at last from the sphere of the Unconscious to the Conscious, has gradually taken possession of all the avenues and passages of the Empire's life, till at the century's close there is not a man capable of sympathies beyond his individual walk whom it does not strengthen and uplift.

§ 2. ANCIENT AND MODERN IMPERIALISM

Definitions are perilous, yet we must now attempt to define this ideal, to frame an answer to the question—What is the nature of this ideal which has thus arisen, of this Imperialism which is insensibly but surely taking the place of the narrower patriotism of England, of Scotland, and of Ireland? Imperialism, I should say, is patriotism transfigured by a light from the aspirations of universal humanity; it is the passion of Marathon, of Flodden or Trafalgar, the ardour of a de Montfort or a Grenville, intensified to a serener flame by the ideals of a Condorcet, a Shelley, or a Fichte. This is the ideal, and in the resolution deliberate and conscious to realise this ideal throughout its dominions, from bound to bound, in the voluntary submission to this as to the primal law of its being, lies what may be named the destiny of Imperial Britain.

As the artist by the very law of his being is compelled to body forth his conceptions in colour, in words, or in marble, so the race dowered with the genius for empire is compelled to dare all, to suffer all, to sacrifice all for the fulfilment

of its fate-appointed task. This is the distinction, this the characteristic of the empires, the imperial races of the past, of the remote, the shadowy empires of Media, of Assyria, of the nearer empires of Persia, Macedon, and Rome. To spread the name, and with the name the attributes, the civilising power of Hellas, throughout the world is the ideal of Macedon. Aristotle, "master of those who know," travels with Alexander in his march against Persia, and urges him as policy to draw the sharpest line between the Greeks and Barbarians. "No," the conqueror answered, "I will make all men Hellenes." The wisdom of a conqueror for once went deeper than the wisdom of the profoundest of political theorists. Similarly of Rome: to subdue the world, to establish there her peace, governing all in justice, marks the Rome of Julius, of Vespasian, of Trajan. And in this measureless devotion to a cause, in this surplus energy, and the necessity of realising its ideals in other races, in other peoples, lies the distinction of the Imperial State, whether city or nation. The origin of these characteristics in British Imperialism we shall examine in a later lecture.

Let me now endeavour to set the distinctive ideal of Britain before you in a clearer light. Observe, first of all, that it is essentially British. It is not Roman, not Hellenic. The Roman ideal moulds every form of Imperialism in Europe, and even to a certain degree in the East, down to the eighteenth century. The theory of the mediæval empire derives immediately from Rome. The Roman justice disguised as righteousness easily warrants persecution, papal or imperial. The Revocation of the Edict of Passau by a Hapsburg, and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes by a Bourbon, trace their origin without a break to that emperor to whom Dante assigns so great a part in the *Paradiso*.[3] Lord Beaconsfield, with the levity in matters of scholarship which he sometimes displayed, once ascribed the phrase *imperium ac libertas* to a Roman historian. The voluntary or accidental error is nothing; but the conception of Roman

[3] Justinian not only in his policy but in his laws sums the history of the three preceding centuries, and determines the history of the centuries which follow. To Dante he represents at once the subtleties of Jurisprudence and Theology. The Eagle's hymn in the *Paradiso* (Cantos xix. xx.) defines the limitations and the glory of Roman and Mediæval Imperialism. The essence of the entire treatise *De Monarchia* is in these cantos; and Canto vi., where Justinian in person speaks, is informed by the same spirit.

Imperialism which it popularised is worth considering. It is false to the genius of Rome. It is not that the phrase nowhere occurs in a Roman historian; but no statesman, no Roman historian, not Sulla, not Cæsar, nor Marcus, could ever have bracketed these words. *Imperiam ac justitia* he might have said; but he could never have used together the conceptions of Empire and Freedom. The peoples subdued by Rome—Spain, Gaul, Africa—received from Rome justice, and for this gift blessed Rome's name, deifying her genius. But the ideal of Freedom, the freedom that allows or secures for every soul the power to move in the highest path of its being, this is no pre-occupation of a Roman statesman! Yet it is in this ideal of freedom that the distinction, or at least a distinction of Modern, as opposed to Roman or Hellenic, Europe consists; in the effort, that is to say, to spiritualise the conception of outward justice, of outward freedom, to rescue individual life from the incubus of the State, transfiguring the State itself by the larger freedom, the higher justice, which Sophocles seeks in vain throughout Hellas, which Virgil in Rome can nowhere find.

The common traits in the Kreon of tragedy and the Kritias of history, in the hero of the *Aeneid* and the triumvir Octavianus, are not accident, but arise from the revolt of the higher freedom of Art, conscious or unconscious, against the essential egoism of the wrong masking as right, of the ancient State. And it is in the Empire of Britain that this effort of Modern Europe is realised, not only in the highest, but in the most original and varied forms. The power of the Roman ideal, on the other hand, saps the preceding empires of Modern Europe down to the seventeenth century, the empire of the German Cæsars, the Papacy itself, Venice, Spain, Bourbon France. Consider how completely the ideals of these States are enshrined in the *De Monarchia*, and how closely the *De Monarchia* knits itself to Cæsarian and to consular Rome!

The political history of Venice, stripped of its tinsel and melodrama, is tedious as a twice-told tale. Her art, her palaces are her own eternally, a treasury inexhaustible as the light and mystery of the waters upon which she rests like a lily, the changeful element multiplying her structured loveliness and the opalescent

hues of her sky. But in politics Venice has not enriched the world with a single inspiring thought which Rome had not centuries earlier illustrated more grandly, more simply, and with yet profounder meanings.

Spain falls, not as Carlyle imagines, because it "rejects the Faith proffered by the visiting angel,"—a Protestant Spain is impossible,—but because Spain seeks to stifle in the Netherlands, in Europe at large, that freedom which modern Europe had come to regard as dearer than life —freedom to worship God after the manner nearest to its heart. But disaster taught Spain nothing,—

> *ἰὼ βρότεια πράγματ᾽· εὐτυχοῦντα μὲν*
> *σκιά τις ἀντρέψειεν· εἰ δὲ δυστυχῇ*
> *βολαῖς ὑγρώσσων σπόγγος ὤλεσε γραφήν.*
> *καὶ ταῦτ᾽ ἐκείνων μᾶλλον οἰκτείρω πολύ.*

> Alas, for mortal history! In happy fortune
> A shadow might overturn its height; whilst of disaster
> A wet sponge at a stroke effaces the lesson;
> And 'tis this last I deem life's greater woe.

The embittered wisdom of Aeschylus finds in all history no more shining comment than the decline of Spain.[4]

[4] Portugal in the first half of the sixteenth century presents a further instance of an empire actuated by the same ideals as those of

The gloomy resolution of the Austrian Ferdinand II., the internecine war of thirty years which he provokes, sullenly pursues, and in dying bequeaths to his son, are visited upon his house at Leuthen, Marengo, Austerlitz, and in the overthrow of the empire devised ten centuries before by Leo III. and Charlemagne.

And with the Revocation, with Le Tellier and the Bull *Unigenitus*, the procession of the French kings begins, which ends in the Place de la Révolution :—"Son of St. Louis, ascend to Heaven."

Spain. Within a single century, almost within the memory of a single life, Portugal appears successively as a strong united nation, an empire of great and far-stretched renown, and then, by a revolution in fortune of which there are few examples, as a vanquished and subject State. Her merchants were princes, her monarchs, John II., Emmanuel, John III., and Sebastian, were in riches kings of the kings of Europe. But during the brief period of Portugal's glory, tyranny and bigotry went hand in hand. To the pride of her conquistadores was added the fanaticism of Xavier and his retinue, and in the very years when within the same region Baber and Akbar were raising the wise and tolerant administration of the first Moguls, the Inquisition, with its priests, incantations, and torture-chambers, was established at Goa. The resemblance in feature, bearing, and in character between the Gilberts, the Grenvilles, and the Alboquerques and Almeidas is indisputable; but certain ineffaceable and intrinsic distinctions ultimately force themselves upon the mind. And these distinctions mark the divergence between the fate and the designs of England and the fate and the design of Lusitania, between the empire of Portugal and that of Britain. Indeed, upon the spirit of mediæval imperialism the work of Osorio is hardly less illuminating than the deliberate treatise of Dante.

From this thraldom to the past, to the ideal of Rome, Imperial Britain, first amongst modern empires, completely breaks. For it is a new empire which Imperial Britain presents to our scrutiny, a new empire moulded by a new ideal.

Let me illustrate this by a contrast—a contrast between two armies and what each brings to the vanquished.

Who that has read the historian of Alva can forget the march of his army through the summer months some three hundred and thirty years ago? That army, the most perfect that any captain had led since the Roman legions left the world, defiles from the gorges of Savoy, and division behind division advances through the passes and across the plains of Burgundy and Lorraine. One simile leaps to the pen of every historian who narrates that march, the approach of some vast serpent, the glancing of its coils unwinding still visible through the June foliage, fateful, stealthy, casting upon its victim the torpor of its irresistible strength. And to the Netherlands what does that army bring? Death comes with it—death in the shape most calculated to break the resolution of the most dauntless,—the rack, the solitary

dungeon, the awful apparel of the Inquisition torture-chamber, the *auto-da-fé*, and upon the evening air that odour of the burning flesh of men wherewith Philip of Spain hallowed his second bridals. These things accompany the march of Alva. And that army of ours which day by day advances not less irresistibly across the veldt of Africa, that army upon which the eyes of the world are fastened, in rancour or in prayer, what does that army portend? That army brings with it not the rack, nor the dungeon, nor the dread *auto-da-fé*; it brings with it, and not to one people only but to the vast complexity of peoples within her bounds, the assurance of England's unbroken might, of her devotion to that ideal which has exercised a conscious sway over the minds of three generations of her sons, and quickened in the blood of the unreckoned generations of the past—an ideal, shall I say, akin to that of the prophet of the French revolution, Diderot, "*élargissez Dieu!*"—to liberate God within men's hearts, so that man's life shall be free, of itself and in itself, to set towards the lodestar of its being, harmony with the Divine. And it brings to the peoples of Africa, to whom the coming of

this army is for good or evil so eventful, so fraught with consequences to the future ages of their race, some assurance from the designs, the purposes which this island has in early or recent times pursued, that the same or yet loftier purposes shall guide us still; whilst to the nations whose eyes are fastened upon that army it offers some cause for gratulation or relief, that in this problem, whose vast issues, vista receding behind vista, men so wide apart as Napoleon I. and Victor Hugo pondered spell-bound,—that in this arena where conflicts await us beside which, in renunciation, triumph, or despair, this of to-day seems but a toy,—that in this crisis, a crisis in which the whole earth is concerned, the Empire has intervened, definitely and for all time, which more than any other known to history represents humanity, and in its dealings with race distinctions and religious distinctions does more than any other represent the principle that "God has made of one blood all the nations of the earth."

§ 3. THE HATRED OF THE NATIONS

At the present hour indeed there is outcry, indignant, loud, unanimous, from east, west,

north, and south, like a sea of hate encircling the British name. But it needs no very prolonged study of history to grasp the maxim, which is a topic in Herodotus and Thucydides, that human excellence in all ages, in whatever form it may manifest itself—Truth, Freedom, Genius, Beauty, Virtue—instantly arouses in men or nations a power, dark and malevolent, *Phthonos*, Immortal Envy, between which and human excellence eternal enmity is fixed. The strife between Ormuzd and Ahriman is closed, but it rages unabated amongst the children of men. How shall this new empire, actuated by a new ideal, escape the lot which has attended the birth of every noble thing? Whither shall it look for another escort than that which hunted Athens to the death?

To Russia?—the very present oppressor of the Finns—to her who established peace by assassination at Warsaw, the peace of the grave? With what other eyes than those of hate can she contemplate that empire whose ideal is Freedom, the freedom that Russia strangles wheresoever it springs throughout her vast confines, whose martyrs on her own hearth she sends in gangs to the Siberian

mines, or leaves to rot in underground dungeons.[5] Is it to Austria that England shall turn for a godspeed to her high emprise? To Vienna, to Mozart's city? As she lies

[5] In the current number of the *Quarterly*, the editor of the *Deutsche Rundschau*, discussing the question why Germany hates England, alleges as prime cause of the present outburst the outrage upon German ethical sensibilities which this unjust war has inflicted. Yet the inhabitants of Alsace and of Schleswig-Holstein might have something to reply to this ethical sensibility of Germany. Professor Mommsen has recently added the weight of his great name to a similar theory. Mommsen's accusation of England would be more troubling if the political tone of recrimination, badly disguised by an air of philosophical resignation, and the obviously affected reference to the Swiss, and the assumption, not less obviously erroneous, that Britain has in recent years departed from the great traditions of the past, did not blunt the edge of his criticism and rob even his words of their force. But indeed the crisis is too acute to ponder nicely the opinions of interested or dispassionate critics, and the present outburst of hostility will confer on England a signal service if it compel her to see again that the war between State and State is truceless, that misrepresentation and slander, or, as in the present instance, affront and insult, are in peace what rifle-shots are on the battlefield. In general, the effect of the outcry against England can in the long run only tend to diminish the mighty influence which the moral condemnation of this or that action by the wide earth might in the future have acquired. The crimes of a Tudor, a Medici, or a Hapsburg were done in a corner. When the world became aware of them, the victim was beyond the reach of active sympathy, and indignation against the doer was dulled by time or the sequence of political events, alliances, or intrigues. But the electric cable has made the whole world, so to speak, a spectator of the actions of States or individuals in the very hour of performance. A new force in international politics seemed born, but how little instant or effective power it as yet possesses the history of the Rennes trial and of the Armenian massacres indicate.

there, the Queen of the Danube, robed in the cerements of her dead past, what memories are hers! That long array of her Hapsburg monarchs, tragic amongst the most tragic lines in history, tragic as the Capet, as the Stuart line, the House of Austria, memorable to all ages for its unwearying endeavours to crush, to destroy by its slow, brutal, unyielding oppression, the highest of all freedom, that which no man surrenders save with his life—the right to think as his heart's heart impels him of God, and of man's relations to God! How shall Austria look on with tranquil eyes whilst Britain pursues the fate-appointed task which she declined?—

> Virtutem videant intabescantque relicta!
>
> Let them gaze on Freedom, and mortify from the glory missed!

To France? Of France and her recent utterances how shall one speak fitly?—of the great nation that but a century ago was the world's forlorn hope in the war against ancient wrong, named then, and not unfitly named, "the Christ of Nations." The eighteenth century is hers entirely. If there is anything

great in the eighteenth century it is to France that the world must look for that greatness or its inspiration. Whatever was free, ardent, bold in human thought and literature, even in the deeds and aspirations of men, came thence. She was then in very truth the world's centre. But passed in the race for empire, how changed is the aspect of that France! Inexorable fate has closed the door against France, and behind it she crouches muttering calumnies, scrawling caricatures. Is this France? *this* the nation of Rivarol, Chénier, and Mirabeau, of Racine, Montesquieu, and Renan?

Russia, Austria, France failing her, is it from the Black League of Loyola that England may hope for intelligence, for sympathy? From the Black League of Loyola, that hydra-like lifts its myriad heads in Germany, France, Italy, England itself, hissing outrage, venomous insult, slander, subtle lies, in all its journals, dimming the lustre of heroic deeds, assailing the courage of the unreplying dead, fallen in the war! How faithful is the Brotherhood to the traditions of its past, undeviating in its worship of its three strange Graces—Treason, Assassination, Calumny; how true to

the Master's command, *quasi cadaver*, "Rest not, till the soul of a man be as a dead thing in your hands"!

§ 4. THE MANDATE OF DESTINY

In these two armies then, and in what each brings to the vanquished, the contrast between two forms of Imperialism outlines itself sharply. The earlier, that of the ancient world, little modified by mediæval experiments, limits itself to concrete, to external justice, imparted to subject peoples from above, from some beneficent monarch or tyrant; the later, the Imperialism of the modern world, the Imperialism of Britain, has for its end the larger freedom, the higher justice whose root is in the soul not of the ruler but of the race. The former nowhere looks beyond justice; this sees in justice but a means to an end. It aims through freedom to secure that men shall find justice, not as a gift from Britain, but as they find the air around them, a natural presence. Justice so conceived is not an end in itself, but a condition of man's being. In the ancient world, government ever tends to

identify itself with the State, even when, as in Rome or Persia, that State is imperial. In the modern, government with concrete justice, civic freedom as its aims, ever tends to become but a function of the State whose ideal is higher.

The vision of the *De Monarchia*—one God, one law, one creed, one emperor, semi-divine, far-off, immaculate, guiding the round world in justice, the crowning expression of Rome's ideal by a great poet whose imagination was on fire with the memory of Rome's grandeur—does but describe after all an exterior justice, a justice showered down upon men by a beneficent tyrant, a Frederick I., inspired by the sagas of Siegfried and of Charlemagne, or the second Frederick, the "Wonder of the World" to the thirteenth century, and ever alluring, yet ever eluding, the curiosity of the nineteenth; or a Henry VII., ineffectual and melancholic. Such "justice" passes easily by its own excess into the injustice which dispatches Alva's army or finds bizarre expression in the phrase of "le Roi soleil." "The State? I am the State." The ideal of modern life, the ideal of which Britain is the supreme repre-

sentative amongst existing empires, starting not from justice but from freedom, may be traced beyond the French Revolution and the Reformation, back even to the command "Render unto Cæsar." That word thrust itself like a wedge into the ancient unity of the State and God. It carried with it not merely the doom of the Roman Empire, but of the whole fabric of ancient relations of State and Individual. Yet Sophocles felt the injustice of this justice four centuries before, as strongly as Tertullian, the Marat of dying Rome, felt it two centuries after that command was uttered.

Such then is the character of the ideal. And in the resolution as a people, for the furtherance of its great ends, to do all, to suffer all, as Rome resolved, lies what may be described as the destiny of Imperial Britain. None more impressive, none loftier has ever arisen within the consciousness of a people. And to England through all her territories and seas the moment for that resolution is now. If ever there came to any city, race, or nation, clear and high through the twilight spaces, across the abysses where the stars

wander, the call of its fate, it is NOW! There is an Arab fable of the white steed of Destiny, with the thunder mane and the hoofs of lightning, that to every man, as to every people, comes *once*. Glory to that man, to that race, who dares to mount it! And that steed, is it not nearing England now? Hark! the ringing of its hoofs is borne to our ears on the blast!

Temptations to fly from this decision, to shrink from the great resolve, to temporise, to waver, have at such moments ever presented themselves to men and to nations. Even now they present themselves, manifold, subtly disguised, insidiously persuasive, as exhortations to humility, for instance, as appeals to the deference due to the opinion of other States! But in the faith, the undying faith, that it, and it alone, can perform the fate-appointed task, dwells the virtue of every imperial race that History knows. How shall any empire, any state, conscious of its destiny, imitate the self-effacement prescribed to the individual—"In honour preferring one another"? This in an imperial State were the premonition of decay, the presage of death.

But there is one great pledge, a solemn warrant of her resolve to swerve not, to blench not, which England has already offered. That pledge is Elandslaagte, it is Enslin, the Modder, and the bloody agony of Magersfontein. For it grows ever clearer as month succeeds month that it is by the invincible force of this ideal, this of Imperial Britain, that we have waged this war and fought these battles in South Africa. It is for this cause—or for a cause so false to all the past, from Agincourt to Balaklava, that it has but to be named to carry with it its own refutation. There is a kind of tragic elevation in the very horror of the march of Attila, of Ginghis Khan, or of Timour. But to assemble a host from all the quarters of this wide Empire, to make Africa, as it were, the rendezvous of the earth, for the sake of a few gold, a few diamond mines, what language can equal a design thus base, ambition thus sordid? And if we think of the dead who have fallen in this war, of those who at its beginning were with us in the radiance of their manhood, but now, still in the grave, all traces of life's majesty not yet gone from their brow,—if those dead lips ask us, "Why

are we here? And in what cause have we died?" surely it were a hard thing for Britain, for Europe, indeed for all the world, if the only answer we could make to the question were, "It is for the gold, it is for the diamonds of the mines." No man can believe that; no man, save him whose soul faction has sealed in impenetrable night! The imagination recoils revolted, terror-struck. Reply is impossible; the thing simply is not British.

Indeed, in very deed, it is for another cause, and for another ideal—an ideal that, gathering to itself down the ages the ardour of their battle-cries, falls in all the splendour of a new hope about the path of England now. For this these men have died, from the first battle of the war to that fought yesterday. And it is this knowledge, this certainty, which gives us heart to acquiesce, as each of us is compelled to acquiesce, in the presence of that army in South Africa. They have fallen, fighting for all that has made our race great in the past, for this, the mandate of destiny to our race in the future. They have fallen, those youths, self-devoted to death, with a courage so impetuous, casting their youth away as if it were a thing of no

account, a careless trifle, life and all its promises! But yesterday in the flush of strength and beauty; to-night the winds from tropic seas stir the grass above their graves, the southern stars look down upon the place of their rest. For this ideal they have died—"in their youth," to borrow the phrase of a Greek orator, "torn from us like the spring from the year."

Fallen in this cause, in battle for this ideal, behold them advance to greet the great dead who fell in the old wars! See, through the mists of time, Valhalla, its towers and battlements, uplift themselves, and from their places the phantoms of the mighty heroes of all ages rise to greet these English youths who enter smiling, the blood yet trickling from their wounds! Behold, Achilles turns, unbending from his deep disdain; Rustum, Timoleon, Hannibal, and those of later days who fell at Brunanburh, Senlac, and Trafalgar, turn to welcome the dead whom we have sent thither as the *avant-garde* of our faith, that in this cause is our destiny, in this the mandate of our fate.

LECTURE II

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE POLITICAL IDEAL

[Tuesday, 15th May 1900.]

MAN'S path lies between the living and the dead, and History seems to move between two hemispheres that everywhere touch yet unite nowhere, the Past, shadowy, vast, illimitable, that at each moment ends, the Future not less shadowy, vast, illimitable, that at each moment begins. The question, "What is History?" is but the question, "What is Life?" transferred from the domain of the Present to the domain of the Past. To understand the whorl of a shell would require an intelligence that has grasped the universe, and for the knowledge of the history of an hour the æons of the fathomless past were not excessive as a preliminary study. Massillon's injunction, "Look thou within," does but discover to our view in

nerve-centres, in emotional or in instinctive tendencies, hieroglyphics graven by long vanished ancestral generations. But Nature, to guard man from despair, has fashioned him a contemporary of the remotest ages. The beam of light, however far into space it travel, yet remains unsevered from the orb whence it sprang, and Man, the youngest-born of Time, is yet one with the source whence he came. As age flies past after age, the immanence of the Divine grows more, not less insistent. Each moment indeed is rooted in the dateless past inextricably; but to its interpretation the soul comes, a wanderer from æons not less distant, laden with the presaging memories, experiences, innumerable auxiliaries unseen, which the past itself has supplied for its own conquest or that of the present. Trusting to these, man is unmoved at the narrowness of his conscious sovereignty, as the eye is unmoved at the narrow bounds that hedge its vision, and finds peace where he would otherwise have found but despair.

Those affinities, those intimate relations of the past and present, are the basis of speculative politics. A judgment upon a movement

in the present, an opinion hazarded upon the curve which a state, a nation, or an empire will describe in the future, is of little value unless from a wide enough survey the clear sanction of the past can be alleged in its support.

Assuming therefore that in the ideal delineated above we have the ideal of a race destined to Empire, and at last across the centuries grown conscious of that destiny, the question confronts us—is it possible out of the past, not surveying it from the vantage-ground of the present merely, but as it were living into the present from the past, to foreshadow the rise of this consciousness? Or turning back in the light of this consciousness to the past, is there offered by the past a justification of this interpretation of the present, of this movement styled "Imperialism"?

The heart of the matter lies in the transformation of mediæval patriotism into modern imperialism, in the evolution or development which out of the Englishman of the earlier centuries has produced the Englishman of the present, moved by other and higher political ends. Is there any incident or series of

incidents in our history, of magnitude enough profoundly to affect the national consciousness, to which we may look for the causes, or for the formative spirit, of this change? And in their effect upon the national consciousness of Britain have these incidents followed any law traceable in other nations or empires?

§ I. OF THE ACTION OF STATES AND OF INDIVIDUALS

There is a kind of criticism directed against politics which, year by year or month by month, makes the discovery that between the code which regulates the action of States and the code which regulates the actions of individuals divergencies or contradictions are constantly arising. War violates the ordinances of religion; diplomacy, the ordinances of truth; expediency, those of justice. And the conclusion is drawn that whatever be the softening influences of civilisation upon the relations of private life, within the sphere of politics, barbarism, brutally aggressive or craftily obsequious, reigns undisturbed. Era succeeds era, faiths rise and set, statesmen and thinkers, prophets

and martyrs, act, speak, suffer, die, and are seen no more; but, scornful of all their strivings, the great Anarch still stands sullen and unaltered by the centuries. And these critics, undeterred by Burke's hesitation to "draw up an indictment against a whole nation," make bold to arraign Humanity itself, charging alike the present and the past with perpetual self-contradiction, an hypocrisy that never dies.

Underlying this impeachment of Nations and States in their relations to each other the assumption at once reveals itself, that every State, whether civic, national, or imperial, is but an aggregate of the individuals that compose it, and should accordingly be regulated in its actions by the same laws, the same principles of conduct, as control the actions of individuals. And he therefore is the greatest statesman who constrains the State as nearly as possible into the line prescribed to the individual—whatever ruin and disaster attend the rash adventure! The perplexity is old as the embassy of Carneades, young as the self-communings of Mazzini.

Yet certain terms, current enough amongst

those who deliver or at least acquiesce in this indictment (such as "Organism" or "Organic Unity" as applied to the State), might of themselves suggest a reconsideration of the axiom that the State is but an aggregate of individuals. The unity of an organism, though arising from the constituent parts, is yet distinct from the unity of those parts. Even in chemistry the laws which regulate the molecule are not the laws which regulate the constituent atoms. And in that highest and most complex of all unities, the State, we find, as we might expect to find, laws of another range, and a remoter purport, obscurer to us in their origins, more mysterious in their tendencies, than the laws which meet us in the unities which compose it. In the region in which States act and interact, whether with Plato we regard it as more divine, or as Rousseau passionately insists, as lower, the laws which are valid must at least be *other* than the laws valid amongst individuals. The orbit described by the life of the State is of a wider, a mightier sweep than the orbit of the separate life. The life which the individual surrenders to the State is not one with the

life which he receives in return; yet even of this interchange no analysis has yet laid bare the conditions.

These considerations are not designed to imply that in the relations between States the code of individual ethics is necessarily annulled; but to suggest that the laws which regulate the actions or the suffering of States, as such, have too peremptorily been assumed to be, by nature and the ground-plan of the universe, identical with the laws of individual life, its actions or its sufferings, and that it is something of a *petitio principii*, in the present stage of our knowledge, to judge the one by the standards applicable only to the other.

The profoundest students of the actions of States have in all times been aware, not of the fixed antagonism, but of the essential distinction, between the two codes. Every principle of Machiavelli is implicit in Thucydides, and Sulla, whom Montesquieu selects as the supreme type of Roman grandeur, does but follow principles which reappear in the politics of an Innocent III. or a Richelieu, a Cromwell or an Oxenstiern. The loss of Sulla's

Commentaries[1] is irreparable as the loss of the fifth book of the *Annals* of Tacitus, as the *Epaminondas* of Plutarch, or the burnt *Memoirs* of Shaftesbury; in the literature of politics it is a disaster without a parallel. What Sulla felt as a first, most living impulse appears in later times as a colder, a critical judgment. It is thus that it presents itself to Machiavelli, not the writer of that *jeu d'esprit*, *Il Principe*, perplexing as *Hamlet*, and as variously interpreted, but the author of the stately periods of the *Istorie* and the *Discorsi*, the haughtiest of speculators, and in politics the profoundest of modern thinkers. M. Sorel encounters little difficulty in proving that the diplomacy of Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is but an exposition of the principles of the *Discorsi;* Frederick the Great, who started his literary activity by the refutation of the *Prince*, began and ended his political

[1] The twenty-two books of Sulla's Memoirs, *rerum suarum gestarum commentarii*, were dedicated to his friend Lucullus; they were still in existence in the time of Tacitus and Plutarch, though the fragments which now remain serve but to mock us with regret for the loss. Of Sulla's verses,—like many cultured Romans of that age, the conqueror of Caius Marius amused his leisure with writing Greek epigrams,—exactly so much has survived as of the troubadour songs of Richard I. of England, or of Frederick II. of Jerusalem and Sicily.

career as if his one aim were to illustrate the maxims that in the rashness of inexperience he had condemned; and within living memory, the vindicator of Oliver Cromwell found in the composition of the same Frederick's history the solace and the torment of his last and greatest years.

To press this inquiry further would be foreign to the present subject; enough has been said to indicate that from whatever deep unity they may spring, the laws which determine the life of a State, as displayed in History, are not identical with the laws of individual life. The region of Art, however, seems to offer a neutral territory, where it is possible to obtain some perception, or *Ahnung* as a German would say, of the operation in the life of States of a law which bears directly upon the problem before us.

§ 2. THE LAW OF TRAGEDY AS APPLIED TO HISTORY

In the history of past empires, their rise and decline, in the history of this Empire of Britain from the coming of Cerdic and Cynric to the

present momentous crisis, there reveals itself a force, an influence, not without analogy to the influence ascribed by Aristotle to Attic Tragedy. The function of Tragedy he defined as the purification of the soul by Compassion and by Terror—*δι' ἐλέου καὶ φόβου κάθαρσις*. Critics and commentators still debate the precise meaning of the definition; but my interpretation, or application of it to the present inquiry is this, that by compassion and terror the soul is exalted above compassion and terror, is lifted above the touch of pity or of fear, attaining to a state like that portrayed by Dante—

> Io son fatta da Dio, sua merce, tale,
> Che la vostra miseria non mi tange
> Ne fiamma d' esto incendio non m' assale.[2]

In the tragic hour the soul is thus vouchsafed a deeper vision, discerns a remoter, serener, mightier ideal, which henceforth it pursues unalterably, undeviatingly, as if swept on by a law of Nature itself. Sorrow, thus conceived, is the divinest thought within the Divine mind, and when manifested in that most

[2] "God in His mercy such created me
"That misery of yours attains me not,
"Nor any flame assails me of this burning."

complex of unities, the consciousness of a State, the soul of a race, it assumes proportions that by their very vagueness inspire but a deeper awe, presenting a study the loftiest that can engage the human intellect.

Genius for empire in a race supplies that impressiveness with which a heroic or royal origin invests the protagonist of a tragedy, an Agamemnon or a Theseus. Hence, though traceable in all, the operation of this law, analogous to the law of Tragedy, displays itself in the history of imperial cities or nations, in grander and more imposing dimensions. Nowhere, for instance, are its effects exhibited in a more impressive manner than in the fall of Imperial Athens,—most poignantly perhaps in that hour of her history which transforms the character of Athenian politics, when amid the happy tumult of the autumn vintage, the choric song, the procession, the revel of the Oschophoria, there came a rumour of the disaster at Syracuse, which swiftly silenced, started to life again, a wild surmise, then panic, and the dread certainty of ruin. That hour was but the essential agony of a soul-conflict which, affecting a generation, marks the transforma-

tion of the Athens of Kimon and Ephialtes, of Kleon and Kritias, into the Athens[3] of Plato and Isocrates, of Demosthenes and Phocion. In the writings of such men, in their speculations upon politics, one pervading desire encounters us, alike in the grave serenity of the *Laws*, the impassioned vehemence of the *Crown*, in the measured cadences of the *Panegyric*, the effort to lead Athens towards some higher enterprise, to secure for Athens and for Hellas some uniting power, civic or imperial, another empire than that which fell in Sicily, and moved by a loftier ideal. The

[3] In illustration of this position a contrast might be drawn between the policy of Athens in Melos, as set forth by Thucydides in the singular dialogue of the fifth book, and the part assigned to Justice by a writer equally impersonal, grave, and unimpassioned—the author of the *Politics* —in the recurrence throughout that work of such phrases as "The State which is founded on Justice alone can stand." "Man when perfected (τελεωθέν) is the noblest thing that lives, but separated from justice (χωρισθὲν νόμου καὶ δίκης) the basest of all." "Virtue cannot be the ruin of those who possess it, nor Justice the destruction of a City." The tragedies of Sophocles that are of a later date than 413 B.C. betray an attitude towards political life distinct from that which characterises his earlier works. The shading-in of the life of the State into that of the individual defies analysis, and it were hazardous to affirm what traits of thought ought to be referred to the genius of the State as distinct from the individual; but it appears as difficult to imagine *before* Syracuse, the vehement insistence upon Justice, the impassioned idealisation which characterise Plato, Socrates, and Demosthenes, as it is difficult *after* Syracuse to imagine the political temper of a Pericles or an Anaxagoras.

serious admiration of Thucydides for Sparta, the ironic admiration of Socrates, Plato's appeals to Crete and to ancient Lacedæmon, these are not renegadism, not disloyalty to Athens, but fidelity to another Athens than that of Kleon or of Kritias. History never again beheld such a band of pamphleteers![4]

In the history of Rome, during the second war against Carthage, a similar moment occurs. After Cannæ, Rome lies faint from hæmorrhage, but rises a new city. The Rome of Gracchus and of Drusus is greater than the Rome of the Decemvirs. It is not the inevitable change which centuries bring; another, a higher purpose has implanted itself within Rome's life as a State. The Rome of Gracchus and of Drusus

[4] The Greek orators and philosophers of the fourth century B.C. had before them a problem not without resemblances to that which confronted the Hebrew prophets of Judæa in the seventh. Even their most speculative writings had a practical end, a goal which they considered attainable by Hellas, or by Athens. The disappearance of Socrates from the *Laws*, the increased seriousness of the treatment of Sparta and of Crete, the original and paragon of Lacedæmon, may indicate a concession to the prejudices of a generation which had grown up since Aegospotami, and a last effort by Plato to bring his teaching home to the common life of Athens and of Hellas. So in the England of the seventeenth century the political writings of Bacon and Hobbes, of Milton and Harrington, though speculative in form, are most practical in their aims. Hobbes' first literary effort indeed, his version of Thucydides, is planned as a warning to England against civil discord and its ills. This was in 1628—fatal date!

announces Imperial Rome, the Rome of the Cæsars.

So in the history of Islam, from the anguish and struggles of the eighth century, the Islam of Haroun and Mutasim arises, imparting even to dying Persia, as it were, a second prime, by the wisdom and imaginative justice of its sway.

In the development of Imperial Britain, the conflict which in the life-history of these two States, Athens and Rome, has its essential agony at Cannæ or at Syracuse, the conflict which affects the national consciousness as the hour of tragic insight affects the individual life, finds its parallel in the fifteenth century. After the short-lived glory of Agincourt and the vain coronation at Paris, humiliation follows humiliation, calamity follows calamity. The empire purchased by the war of a century is lost in a day; and England's chivalry, as if stung to madness by the magnitude of the disaster, turns its mutilating swords, like Paris after Sedan, against itself. The havoc of civil war prolongs the rancour and the shame of foreign defeat, so that Rheims, Chatillon, Wakefield, Barnet, and Tewkesbury, with other less remembered woes, seem like moments in one long tempest of fiery

misery that breaks over England, stilled at last in the desperate lists at Bosworth.

This period neglected, perhaps wisely neglected, by the political historian, is yet the period to which we must turn for the secret sources of that revolution in its political character which, furthered by the incidents that fortune reserved for her, has gradually fashioned out of the England of the Angevins the Imperial Britain of to-day.

In England it is possible to trace the operation of this transforming power, which I have compared to the transforming power of tragedy, in a very complete manner. It reveals itself, for instance, in two different modes or aspects, which, for the sake of clearness, may be dealt with separately. In the first of these aspects, deeply and permanently affecting the national consciousness, which as we have seen is distinct from the sum of the units composing it, the law of tragedy appears as the influence of suffering, of "terror" in the mystic transcendental sense of the word, of reverent fear, yet with it, serene and dauntless courage. This influence now makes itself felt in English politics, in English religion, in English civic life.

If we consider the history of England prior to this epoch, it might at first sight appear as if here were a race emphatically not destined for empire. Not in her dealings with conquered France, not in Ireland, not in Scotland, does England betray, in her national consciousness, any sympathy even with that aspiration towards concrete justice which marks the imperial character of Persia and of Rome. England seems fated to add but one record more to the tedious story of unintelligent tyrant States, illustrating the theme—*ὕβρις φυτεύει τυραννόν*—"insolence begets the tyrant!" Even to her contemporary, Venice, the mind turns from England with relief; whilst in the government of Khorassan by the earlier Abbassides we encounter an administration singularly free from the defects that vitiate Imperial Rome at its zenith. And now in the days of the first Tudors all England's efforts at empire have come to nothing. Knut's empire sinks with him; Norman and Plantagenet follow; but of their imperial policy the dying words of Mary Tudor, "Calais will be found graven on my heart," form the epitaph. It was not merely the loss of Calais that oppressed the dying Queen, but she felt in-

stinctively, obscurely, prophetically that here was an end to the empire which her house had inherited from Norman and Plantagenet.

But in the national consciousness, the consciousness of the State, a change is now apparent. As Athens rose from Syracuse, a new Athens, as Rome rose from Cannæ, a new city, to conquer by being conquered, so from the lost dreams of empire over France, over Scotland, England arises a new nation. This declares itself in the altered course of her policy alike in France, Ireland, and Scotland. In Ireland, for instance, an incomplete yet serious and high-purposed effort is made to bring, if not justice, at least law to the hapless populations beyond the Pale. Henry VIII. again, like Edward I., is a masterful king. In politics, in constructive genius, he even surpasses Edward I. He abandons the folly of an empire in France, and though against Scotland he achieves a triumph signal as that of Edward, he has no thought of reverting to the Plantagenet policy. He defeats the Scots at Flodden; but he has the power of seeing that in spite of his victory they are not defeated at all. King James IV.

lies dead there, with all his earls around him, like a Berserker warrior, his chiefs slain around him, "companions," *comites* indeed, in that title's original meaning. But the spirit of the nation is quickened, not broken, and Henry VIII., recognising this, steadily pursues the policy which leads to 1603, when these two peoples, by a mutual renunciation, both schooled in misery, and with the Hebrew phrase, "Well versed in suffering, and in sorrow deeply skilled," working so to speak in their very blood, are united. The Puritan wars, and the struggle for an ideal higher than that of nationality, cement the union.

In the development of the life of a State, the distance in time between causes and their visible effects often makes the sequence obscure or sink from sight altogether. As in geology the century is useless as a unit to measure the periods with which that science deals, and as in astronomy the mile is useless as a standard for the interstellar spaces; so in history, in tracing the organic changes within the conscious life of a State, the lustrum, the dekætis, or even the generation, would sometimes be a less misleading unit than the year. The

England of Elizabeth drew the first outline of the Empire of the future; but five generations were to pass before the Britain of Chatham[5] could apply itself with a single-hearted resolution to fill that outline in, and yet three other generations before this people as a whole

[5] The elder Pitt may be regarded as the first great minister of the English *people* as distinguished from men like Thomas Cromwell, Strafford, or Clarendon, who strictly were ministers of the king. "It rains gold-boxes," Horace Walpole writes when, in April 1757, Pitt was dismissed, and it was these tokens of his popularity with the merchants of England, not the recognition of his genius by the king, which led to his return to office in June. The events of the period of four years and ten months during which this man was dictator of the House of Commons and of England are so graven on all hearts that a mere enumeration in order of time suffices to recall moving incidents, characters, and scenes of epic grandeur:—Dec. 17, 1756, Pitt-Devonshire ministry formed, Highland regiments raised, national militia organised. **1757,** CLIVE'S victory at Plassey, 23rd June, and conquest of Bengal. **1758,** June 3, destruction of forts at Cherbourg, three ships of war, 150 privateers burned to the sea-line; Nov. 25, Fort Duquesne captured; Dec. 29, conquest of Goree. **1759,** "year of victories"; Feb. 16, Pocock relieves Madras; May 1, capture of Guadaloupe; July 4, R. RODNEY at Havre destroys the flat-bottomed Armada; July 31, WOLFE'S repulse at Beaufort; August 19, BOSCAWEN destroys French fleet in Lagos Bay; Sep. 2, Pocock defeats D'Aché; Sep. 9, WOLFE'S last letter to Pitt; Sep. 13, 10 A.M., Plains of Abraham and conquest of Canada; Nov. 20, HAWKE defeats Conflans in Quiberon Bay, "Lay me alongside the French admiral." **1760,** Jan. 22, EYRE-COOTE defeats Lally at Wandewash, conquest of Carnatic. **1761,** Jan. 16, English enter Pondicherry; Bellisle citadel reduced, "Quebec over again," 7th June; October 5, Pitt resigns. It is doubtful whether, since the eleventh century and Hildebrand and William the Conqueror, the European stage has been occupied simultaneously by two such men as Chatham and the king of Prussia.

was to become completely conscious of its high destiny. Freedom of religion and constitutional liberty had to be placed beyond the peril of encroachment or overthrow, before the Imperial enterprise could be unreservedly pursued; but the deferment of the task has nerved rather than weakened the energy of her resolve. Had England fallen in the Marlborough wars, she would have left a name hardly more memorable than that of Venice or Carthage, illustrious indeed, but without a claim to original or creative Imperialism. But if she were to perish now, it would be in the pursuance of a design which has no example in the recorded annals of man.

Similarly in Rome, two centuries sever the Rome which rose from Cannæ from the Rome which administered Egypt and Hispania. And in Islam four generations languish in misery before the true policy of the Abbassides displays itself, striking into the path which it never abandoned.

In England then the influence of this epoch of tragic insight, and of its transforming force, advances imperceptibly, unnoted across two generations, yet the true sequence of cause

and effect is unquestionable. The England which, towards the close of the eighteenth century, presents itself like a fate amongst the peoples of India, bears within itself the wisdom which in the long run will save it from the errors, and turn it from the path, which the England of the Plantagenets followed in Ireland and in France. The national consciousness of England, stirred to its depths by its own suffering, its own defeats, its own humiliations, comes there in India within the influence of that which in the life of a State, however little it may affect the individual life as such, is the deepest of all suffering. England stands then in the presence of a race whose life is in the memories of its past; its literature, its arts, its empires that rise and dissolve like dreams; its religions, its faiths, with all their strange analogies, dim suggestions, mysterious as a sea cavern full of sounds. Hard upon this experience in India comes that of the farther East, comes that of Egypt, that of Africa in the nineteenth century. How can such a fortune fail to change the heart, the consciousness of a race, imparting to it forces from these wider horizons, deepening its own

life by the contact with this manifold environment? He who might have been a de Montfort, a Grenville, or a Raleigh, is now by these presences uplifted to other ideals, and by these varied and complex influences of suffering, and the presence of suffering, raised from the sphere of concrete freedom and concrete justice to the higher realm ruled by imaginative freedom, imaginative justice, which Sophocles, in the choral ode of the *Oedipus*, delineates, "the laws of sublimer range, whose home is the pure ether, whose origin is God alone."

§ 3. THE LAW OF TRAGEDY: ITS SECOND ASPECT

The second mode or aspect in which the Law of Tragedy as applied to history reveals itself in the life of a State, corresponds to the moment of intenser vision in the individual life, when the soul, exalted by "compassion and terror," discerns the deeper truth, the serener ideal which henceforth it pursues as if impelled by the fixed law of its being. There is a word coined by Aristotle, which comes down the ages to us, bringing with it as it were the sound of the griding of the Spartan swords as they leapt

from their scabbards on the morning of Thermopylæ, the ἐνέργεια τῆς ψυχῆς—the energy of the soul. This energy of the soul in Aristotle is the *vertù* of Machiavelli, the spring of political wisdom, the foundation of the greatness of a State. It is the immortal energy which arises within the consciousness of a nation, or in the soul of an individual, as the result of that hour of insight, of pity, of anguish, or contrition. It is the heroism which adverse fortune greatens, which antagonism but excites to yet sublimer daring.

In Rome this displays itself, both in policy and in war, in the centuries that immediately succeed Cannæ. Nothing in history is more worthy of attention than the impression which Rome in this epoch of her history made upon the minds of men, above all, upon the mind of Hellas. Its expression in Polybius is remarkable.

Polybius, if not one of the greatest of thinkers on politics, has a place with the greatest political historians for all time. It was his work which Chatham placed in the hands of his son, the younger Pitt, as the supreme guide in political history. Polybius

has every inducement to abhor Rome, to judge her actions with jealous and unfriendly eyes. His father was the companion of Philopœmen, the heroic leader of the Achæan league, sometimes styled "the last of the Greeks," the Kosciusko of the old world. Polybius himself is a hostage in Rome, the representative of a defeated race, a lost cause; and yet after years of study of his conquerors, possessing every means for a just estimate of their actions and motives in the senate, on the battlefield, in the intimacies of private life, the conviction of his heart becomes that there in Rome is a people divinely appointed to the government, not of Hellas merely, but of the whole earth. The message of his history, composed with scrupulous care, and a critical method rare in that age, is that the very stars in their courses fight for Rome, whether she wages war against Greek or against Barbarian, that hers is the domination of the earth, the empire of the world, and it is to the eternal honour of Greece that it accepted this message. The Romano-Hellenic empire is born. Other men arise both to the east and to the west of the Adriatic, in whom the Greek and Roman genius are

fused, who pursue the ideal, and amplify or adorn the thought which Polybius was the first to express immortally. It inspires the rhetoric of Cicero; and falls with a kind of glory on the verse of Virgil—

> Excudent alii spirantia mollius aera,
> credo equidem, vivos ducent de marmore vultus,
> orabunt causas melius, caelique meatus
> describent radio et surgentia sidera dicent:
> tu regere imperio populos Romane memento;
> hae tibi erunt artes; pacisque imponere morem,
> parcere subjectis et debellare superbos.

The tutor of Hadrian makes it the informing idea of his parallel "Lives," and gives form and feature to a grandeur that else were incredible. It appears in the duller work of the industrious Dion Cassius, and in the fourth century forges some of the noblest verse of Claudian. And as we have seen, it is enshrined nine centuries after Claudian in the splendid eloquence of the *De Monarchia*, and yields such spent, such senile life as they possess, to the empires of Hapsburg and Bourbon. Thus this divine energy, which after Cannæ uplifts Rome, riveting the sympathies of Polybius, outlives Rome itself, still con-

trolling the imaginations of men, until its last flicker in the eighteenth century.

Where in the history of England, in the life of England as a State, does this energy, exalted by the hour of tragic vision, manifest itself? Recollect our problem; it is by analysis, comparison, and contrast, to discover what is the testimony of the past to Britain's title-deeds of empire.

Great races, like great individuals, resemble the giants in the old myth, the *gigantes*, the earth-born, sons of Gaia, who, thrown in the wrestle, touched her bosom, and rose stronger than before defeat. England stood this test in the sixteenth century, rising from that long humiliating war with France, that not less humiliating war with Scotland, greater than before her defeat. This energy of the soul, quickened by tragic insight, displays itself not merely in the Armada struggle but before that struggle, under various forms in pre-Armada England.

The spirit of the sea-wolves of early times, of the sailors who in the fourteenth century fought at Sluys, and made the Levant an English lake, lives again in the Tudor mariners. But it has

been transformed, and sets towards other and greater endeavours, planning a mightier enterprise. These adventurers make it plain that on the high seas is the path of England's peace; that the old policy of the Plantagenet kings, with all its heroism and indisputable greatness, had been a false policy; that England's empire was not to be sought on the plains of France; that Gilbert, Drake, Raleigh, and Frobisher have found the way to the empire which the Plantagenets blindly groped after.

As Camoens in Portugal invents a noble utterance for the genius of his nation, for the times of Vasco da Gama and of Emmanuel the Great, so this spirit of pre-Armada England, of England which as yet has but the memory of battles gained and lost wars, finds triumphant expression in Marlowe and his elder contemporaries. Marlowe's[6] great dialect seems to fall naturally

[6] The same delight in power, the same glory in dominion, pulsate in the Lusiads and in the dramas of Marlowe, but Marlowe was by far the wider in his intellectual range. Worlds were open to his glance beyond the Indies and Cathay that were shut to Camoens. Yet Camoens is a heroic figure. He found it easy to delineate Vasco da Gama; he had but to speak with his own voice, and utter simply his own heart's desires, hates, musings, and Vasco da Gama's sister would have turned to listen, thinking she heard the accents, the trick, the very manner that betrayed the hero.

from the lips of the heroes of Hakluyt's *Voyages*, that work which still impresses the imagination like the fragments of some rude but mighty epic, and in their company the exaggeration, the emphasis of *Tamburlaine*, are hardly perceptible. In Martin Frobisher, for instance, how the purpose which determines his career illumines for us the England of the first years of Elizabeth! Frobisher in early manhood torments his heart with the resentful reflection, "What a blockish thing it has been on the part of England to permit the Genovese Columbus to discover America!" That task was clearly England's! "And now there being nothing great left to be done," the sole work Frobisher finds worth attempting is the discovery of the north-west passage to Cathay. Upon this he spends the pith of his manhood year by year, and the result of all the labours of this sea-Hercules, well! it is perhaps to be sought in those dim beings, "half-man, half-fish," whom he brings back from some voyage, those forlorn Esquimaux who, seen in London streets, and long remembered, suggested to the dreaming soul of Shakespeare Caliban and his island. Frobisher's watchword on the high seas

is memorable. In the northern latitudes, under the spectral stars, the sentinel of the *Michael* gives the challenge "For God the Lord," and sentinel replies, "And Christ His Sonne."

The repulse of Spain is but the culminating achievement of this energy of the soul which greatens the life of England already in pre-Armada times. And simultaneously with the conflict against Spain this same energy attests its presence in a form assuredly not less divine within the souls of those who rear that unseen empire, whose foundations are laid eternally in the thoughts of men, the empire reared by Shakespeare, Webster, Beaumont, and Milton.

In the seventeenth century it inspires the statesmen of England not only with the ardour for constitutional freedom, but engages them in ceaseless and not unavailing efforts towards a deeper conception of justice and of liberty, foreshadowing unconsciously the ideals of later times. If the Thirty Years' War did nothing else for England it implanted in her great statesmen a profound distrust of the imperial systems of the Bourbons and the Hapsburgs. Eliot, for instance, in the work entitled *The Monarchy of Man*, lofty in its form as in its

thought, written in his prison, though studying Plato and the older ideals of empire, is yet obscurely searching after a new ideal. We encounter a similar effort in the great Montrose, capable of that Scotch campaign, and of writing one of the finest love-songs in the language, capable also of some very vivid thoughts on statesmanship. In natures like Eliot and Montrose, the height of the ideal determines the steadfastness of the action. And that ideal, I repeat, is distinct from Plato's, distinct from Dante's, and from that of the Bourbon and Hapsburg empires, in which Dante's conception is but rudely or imperfectly developed. The ideal of these English statesmen is framed upon another conception of justice, another conception of freedom, equally sublime, and more catholic and humane. Whatever its immediate influence upon certain of their contemporaries, over their own hearts it was all-powerful. The very vividness with which they conceive the ideal, and the noble constancy with which they pursue it, link the high purposes of these two men to the purposes of Milton, of Cromwell, of Selden, and of Falkland. The perfect State, the scope

of its laws, government, religion, to each is manifest, though the path that leads thither may seem now through Monarchy, now through a Republic, or at other times indistinct, or lost altogether in the bewildering maze of adverse interests. From the remote nature of their quest arises much of the apparent inconsistency in the political life of that era. The parting of Pym and Strafford acquires an added, a tragic poignancy, from the consciousness in the heart of each, that the star which leads him on is the star of England's destiny.

Hence, too, the suspicion attached to men like Selden and Falkland of being mere theoricians in advance of their time,—an accusation fatal to statesmanship. But the advent of that age was marked by so much that was novel in religion, in State, in foreign and domestic policy, the new direction of imperial enterprise, the unity of two nations, ancient and apparently irreconcilable foes, the jarring creeds, convulsing the life of both these nations, for both were deeply religious, that it were rash to accuse of rashness any actor in those times. But it is the adventurous daring of their spirits, the swift glance searching the horizons of the

future, it is that very energy of the soul of which I have spoken which render these statesmen obnoxious to the suspicion of theory. The temper of Selden, indeed, in harmony with the thoughtful and melancholy cast of his features, disposed him to subtlety and niceness of argument, and with a division pending, often deprived his words of a force which homelier orators could command. And yet his career is a presage of the future. Toleration in religion, freedom of the press, the supremacy of the seas, the *habeas corpus*, are all lines along which his thought moves, not so much distancing as leading the practical statesmen of his generation. And there is a curious fitness in the dedication to him in 1649 of Edward Pococke's Arabic studies, which nearly a century and a half later were to form the basis of Gibbon's great chapters. But the year of *Mare Clausum* is at once the greatest in Selden's life, and the last months of greatness in the life of his royal master.[7]

[7] The *Mare Clausum* was framed as an answer to Grotius' *Mare Liberum*, which had been printed, perhaps without Grotius' consent, in 1610. Selden's tract, printed in November 1635, is a folio of 304 pages, in which, setting forth precedent on precedent, he claims for England, as by law and ancient custom established, that same supremacy over the high seas as the Portuguese had exercised over the eastern

But theory is a charge which has ever been urged against revolutionists. Revolution is the child of speculation. The men of the seventeenth century are discoverers in politics. Their mark is a wider empire than that of Vasco da Gama and his king, a realm more wondrous than that of Aeëtes. But Da Gama did not steer forthright to the Indies, nor

waters, and Venice over the Adriatic. The King's enthusiasm was kindled. The work was issued with all the circumstance of a State paper, and it came upon foreign courts like a declaration of policy, the resolve at length to enforce the time-honoured and indefeasible rights of England. Copies were with due ceremony deposited in the Exchequer and at the Admiralty. A fleet was equipped, and as an atonement for the wrongs done to the elder Northumberland, the King gave the command to his son, whose portrait as Admiral forms one of the noblest of Vandyke's canvasses. But Northumberland, though brave to a fault, was no seaman, and the whole enterprise threatened to end in ridicule. Stung to the quick, Charles again turned to the nation. But in the nine intervening years since 1628 the nation's heart had left him. To his demand for supplies to strengthen the fleet came Hampden's refusal. The trial was the prelude to the Grand Remonstrance, to Naseby, and to Whitehall, where, as if swept thither by the crowded events of some fantastic dream, he awoke from his visions of England's greatness and the empire of the seas, alone on a scaffold, surrounded by a ring of English eyes, looking hate, sullen indifference, or cold resolution.

> Leave him still loftier than the world suspects,
> Living or dying.

After all he was a king, and in his veins the blood of Mary Stuart still beat. An English version of Selden's treatise appeared in the time of Cromwell. The translator was Marchemont Nedham. The dedication to the Supreme Authority of the Nation, the Parliament of the Commonwealth of England, is dated 19th November 1652.

Jason to the Colchian strand, though each knew clearly the goal he sought, just as Wentworth and Selden, Falkland and Montrose, Eliot and Milton, knew the State they were steering for, though each may have wavered in his own mind as to the course, and at last parted fatally from his companions. Practical does not always mean commonplace, and in the light of their deeds it seems superfluous to discuss whether the writer of *Defensio pro Populo Anglicano*, the destroyer of the Campbells, or the accuser of Buckingham, were practical politicians. In their lives, in the shaping of their careers, the visionary is actualised, the ideal real, in that fidelity of soul which leaves one dead on the battlefield, another on the gibbet, thirty feet high, "honoured thus in death," as he remarked pleasantly, a third to the dreary martyrdom of the Tower, a fourth to that dread visitation, endured with stoic grandeur, and yet at times forcing from his lips the cry of anguish which thrills the verse of Samson Agonistes—

> O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon.
> Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse,
> Without all hope of day.

But not in vain. The tireless centuries have accomplished the task these men initiated, have travelled the path they set forth in, have completed the journey which they began.

We find the same pre-occupation, with some wider conception of justice, empire, and freedom in the younger Barclay, the author of *Argenis*, written in Latin but read in many languages, studied by Richelieu and moulding his later, wiser policy towards the Huguenots, read, above all, by Fénelon, who rises from it to write *Télémaque*. It meets us in the last work of Algernon Sidney, which, like Eliot's treatise, bears about it the air of a martyr's cell. We find it again explicitly in the *Oceana* of Harrington, in the fragmentary writings of Shaftesbury, and in actual politics it finds triumphant expression at last in the eloquence that was like a battle-cry, in the energy that at moments seems superhuman, the wisdom, the penetrating foresight, of the mightiest of all England's statesmen-orators, the elder Pitt. It burns in clear flame in the men who come after him, in his own son, only less great than his great sire; in Charles James Fox and in Windham, who

in the great debate[8] of 1801 fought obstinately to save the Cape when Nelson and St. Vincent would have flung it away; in Canning, Wilberforce, in Romilly; in poets like Shelley, and thinkers like John Stuart Mill.

The revolution in parliamentary representation during the present century, a revolution which, extending over more than fifty years, from 1831 to 1884, may even be compared in its momentous consequences, with the revolution of 1640-88, though constitutional in design, yet forms an integral part of the wider move-

[8] The preliminaries to the Peace of Amiens were signed on 1st October 1801. Parliament opened on the 29th October, and after the King's speech, Windham compared his position amid the general rejoicings of the House at the prospect of an end to the war, to Hamlet's at the wedding-feast of Claudius. In the debate of 3rd November, Pitt declared himself resigned to the loss of the Cape by the retention of Ceylon, while the opinion of Fox was, that by this surrender we should have the benefit of the colony without its expenses. Nelson, with the glory of his victory at Copenhagen just six months old, maintained that in the days when Indiamen were heavy ships the Cape had its uses, but now that they were coppered, and sailed well, the Cape was a mere tavern that served to delay the voyage. The opening of Windham's speech on the 4th, "We are a conquered nation, England gives all, France nothing," defines his position (*Parl. Hist.* xxxvi. pp. 1-191). Windham was one of the few statesmen who, even before the consulate had passed into the Empire, understood the gravity of our relations to France. Every month added proof of the accuracy of his presentiments, but once understood by England there was no faltering. Prussia, Austria, the Czar, all acknowledged the new Empire, and made peace or alliance with its despot, but from the rupture of the Peace of Amiens, England waged a war without truce till Elba and Ste. Hélène.

ment whose course across the centuries we have indicated. The leaders in this revolution, men like Russell and Grey, complete the work which Eliot, Wentworth, and Pym began. They ask the question, else unasked, they answer the question, else unanswered—How shall a people, not itself free, a people disqualified and disfranchised, become the harbinger of a new era to other peoples, or the herald of the higher freedom to the ancient races of India,—Aryans, of like blood with our own, moving forever as in a twilight air, woven of the pride, the pathos, all the sombre yet undecaying memories of their fabulous past,—to the Moslem populations whose "Book" proclaimed the political equality of men twelve centuries before Mirabeau spoke or the Bastille fell?

This, then, is the testimony of the Past, and the witness of the Dead is this. Thus it has arisen, this ideal, the ideal of Britain as distinct from the ideal of Rome, of Islam, or of Persia—thus it has arisen, this Empire, unexampled in present and without a precedent in former times, for Athens under Pericles was but a masked despotism, and the republic-empire of Islam passed swifter than a dream. Thus

it has arisen, this Imperial Britain, from the dark Unconscious emerging to the Conscious, not like an empire of mist uprising under the wands of magic-working architects, but based on heroisms, endurances, lofty ideals frustrate, yet imperishable, patient thought slowly elaborating itself through the ages,—the sea-wolves' battle fury, the splendour of chivalry, the crusader's dazzling hope, the immortal ardour of Norman and Plantagenet kings, baffled, foiled but still in other forms returning to uplift the spirit of succeeding times; the unconquered hearts of Tudor mariners rejoicing in the battle onset and the storm, the strung thought, the intense vision of statesmen of the later centuries, Eliot, Chatham, Canning, and at the last, deep-toned, far-echoing as the murmur of forests and cataracts, the sanctioning voices of enfranchised millions accepting their destiny, resolute! This is the achievement of the ages, this the greatest birth of Time. For in the empires of the past there is not an ideal, not a structural design which these warriors, monarchs, statesmen have not, deliberately or unconsciously, rejected, or, as in an alembic, transmuted to finer purposes and to nobler ends.

LECTURE III

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RELIGIOUS IDEAL

[Tuesday, 22nd May 1900.]

IN the history of the religion of an imperial race, it is not only the development of the ideal within the consciousness of the race itself that we have to consider, but the advance or decline in its conceptions of the religions of the peoples within the zone of its influence or dominion. For such a study the materials are only in appearance less satisfactory than for the study of the political ideal of a race. It is penetratingly observed by La Rochefoucauld that the history of the Fronde can never be accurately written, because the persons in that drama were actuated by motives so base that even in the height of performance each actor of the deeds was striving to make a record of them impossible. The reflection might be extended to

other political revolutions, and to other incidents than the Fronde. Ranke's indefatigable zeal, his anxiety "in history always to see the thing as in very deed it enacted itself," never carried him nearer his object than the impression of an impression. No State papers, no documents, the most authentic, can take us further.

But in this very strife, this zeal for the True, for ever baffled yet for ever renewed, one of the noblest attributes of the present age discovers itself. Indisputable facts are often the sepulchres of thought, and truth after all, not certainty, is the historian's goal. It might even be urged that the records of religion, the martyr's resolution, the saint's fervour, the reformer's aspiration, the prophet's faith, offer a surer hope of attaining this goal than the records of politics.

§ I. RELIGION AND IMPERIALISM

Religion forms an integral part of a nation's life, and in the development of the ideal of Imperial Britain on its religious side, the same transforming forces, the same energy of the soul, the operation of the same law analogous to the

law of tragedy already described, which manifest themselves in politics, are here apparent. The persecuting intolerant England of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, after passing through the Puritan struggle of the seventeenth, the scepticism or indifference of later times, appears at last in the closing years of the nineteenth century as the supreme representative, if not the creator, of an ideal hardly less humane than that of the Humanists themselves—who recognised in every cry of the heart a prayer, silent or spoken, to the God of all the earth, of all peoples, and of all times. The Rome of the Antonines had even in this sphere no loftier ideal, no fairer vision, than that which now seems to float before Imperial Britain, no wider sympathy, not merely with the sects of its own faith, but with the religions of other races within its dominions, once hostile to its own. By slow degrees England has arisen, first to the perception of the truth in other sects, and then to a perception of the truth in other faiths. In lesser creeds, and amongst decaying races, tolerance is sometimes the equivalent of irreligion, but the effort to recognise so far as possible the principle, implicit in Montesquieu,

that a man is *born* of this religion or of that, has, in all ages, been the stamp of imperial races. Upon the character of the race and the character of its religion, depends the answer to the question whether by empire the religion of the imperial race shall be exalted or debased.

As in politics so in religion it is to the fifteenth century—the tragic insight born of defeat, disaster, and soul-anguish—that we must turn for the causes, for the origins of that transformation in the life of the nation which has resulted in the conscious ideal of the Britain of to-day. The "separation" from Rome fifty years after Bosworth had no conscious imperial purpose, but it rescued the rising empire of England from the taint of mediævalism which sapped the empires of Spain, of the Bourbons, and of the Hapsburgs. The Reformation in England owes much of its character amongst the people at large, apart from the government, above all in the heroic age of the Reformation in England — the Puritan wars—to that earlier convulsion in the nation's consciousness, to the period of anguish and defeat of which we have spoken at some length already. But for the remoter origins

and causes of the whole movement styled "the English Reformation" we must search not in any one period or occurrence, but in the character of the race itself. The English Reformation does not begin with Henry VIII. any more than the Scotch Reformation begins with John Knox: it springs from the heart of the race, from the intensity, the tragic earnestness with which in all periods England has conceived the supreme questions of man's destiny, man's relation to the Divine, the "Whence?" and the "Whither?" of human life. And it is the seriousness with which England regards its own religion, and the imaginative sympathy which gives it the power of recognising the sincerity of other religions beneath its sway, which distinguishes Imperial Britain from the empires of the past.

§ 2. THE PLACE OF RELIGION IN ENGLISH HISTORY

In the Roman Empire, for instance, the tolerance of the Republic passes swiftly into the disregard of the Cæsars of the Julian line, into the capricious or ineffectual persecution of

later dynasties. Rome never endeavours in this sphere to lead its subject peoples to any higher vision. When that effort is made, Rome itself is dying. Alaric and the fifth century have come. For Rome the drama of a thousand years is ended: Rome is moribund and has but strength to die greatly, tragically. Would you see the end of Rome as in a figure darkly? Over a dead Roman a Goth bends, and by the flare of a torch seeks to read on the still brow the secret of his own destiny.

In the Empire of Persia and the great days of the Sassanides, in Kurush, who destroys the Median Empire, and spreads wider the religion of the vanquished, the religion of Zerdusht, the symbolic worship of flame, loveliest of inanimate things,—even there no sustained, no deliberate effort, towards an ideal amongst the peoples beneath the Persian sway, can be discovered. Islâm starts with religious aspirations, the most lofty, the most beneficent, but the purity of her ideals dies with Ali. At Damascus and at Bagdad, an autocratic system warped by contact with Rome, infects the religious; the result is a theocracy in which the purposes of Mohammed, at least

on their political side, are abandoned, lost at last in the gloomy and often ferocious despotism of the Ottoman Turks.

Consider in contrast with these empires the question—What is the distinction in this phase of human life of the Empire of Britain, of its history? Steadily growing from its first beginnings—shall I say, from that great battle of the Winwæd, where three Kings are in conflict and the slayer of two lies dead—steadily growing, on to the present hour, as in politics so in religion, the effort sometimes conscious, sometimes unconscious, but persistent, continuous, towards an ever purer, higher, nobler conception of man's relations to the Divine. From this effort arises the Reformation, from this effort arises in the way of a thousand years the Empire based on the higher justice, the imaginative justice, the higher freedom, the imaginative freedom.

Thus even in the earliest periods of our history, during the struggle between Christianism and the religion of Thor and Woden, England shows far more violence, more earnestness, more fury on both sides, than is found anywhere else in Europe. Glance, for instance,

at this struggle in Germany. Witikind[1] the Saxon arises as the champion of the old gods against Christianity. Charlemagne with his Frankish cavalry comes down amongst the Saxons. His march surpasses the march of Cæsar, or of Constantine against Rome. Witikind does rise to the heights of heroism against Charlemagne twice; but in the end he surrenders, gives in, and dies a hanger-on at the court of his conqueror. Mercia, the kingdom of the mid-English, that too produces its champion of the old gods against the religion of Christ—Penda. There is no surrender here; two kings, I repeat, he slays, and grown old in war, he rouses himself like a hoary old lion of the forest to fight his last battle. An *intransigeant*, an irreconcilable, this King Penda, fighting his last battle against this new and hated thing, this Christianism! He lies dead there—he becomes no hanger-on. There you have the spirit of the race. It displays itself

[1] I have retained the familiar spelling of the Saxon hero's name. Giesebrecht, who discovers in the stand against Charlemagne something of the spirit of Arminius, *etwas vom Geiste Armins* (*D.K.I.* p. 112), uses the form "Widukind," and the same form has the sanction of Waitz (*Verfassungsgeschichte*, iii. p. 120). Yet the form Widu-kind is probably no more than a chronicler's theory of the derivation of the name.

in a form not less impressive in the well-known incident in the very era of Penda, described by Bede.

King Eadwine sits in council to discuss the message of Christ, the mansions that await the soul of man, the promise of a life beyond death; and Coifi, one of the councillors, rising, speaks thus:—"So seemeth to me the life of man, O King, as when in winter-tide, seated with your thanes around you, out of the storm that rages without a sparrow flies into the hall, and fluttering hither and thither a little, in the warmth and light, passes out again into the storm and darkness. Such is man's life, but whence it cometh and whither it goeth we know not." "We ne kunnen," as Alfred the Great, its first translator, ends the passage. Who does not see—notwithstanding the difference of time, place, character, and all stage circumstance—who does not see rise before him the judgment-hall of Socrates, hear the solemn last words to his judges: "I go to death, and you to life, but which of us goeth to the better is known to God alone—*ἄδηλον παντὶ πλὴν ἢ τῷ θεῷ*"?

Such is the stern and high manner in which

this conflict in England between the religions of Woden and Christ is conducted. There in the seventh century is the depth of heart, the energy of soul, the pity and the insight which appear in other forms in after ages. The roll of English names in the *Acta Sanctorum* is the living witness of the sincerity, the intensity with which the same men who fought to the death for Woden at the Winwaed, or speculated with Coifi on the eternal mystery, accepted the faith which Rome taught, the ideal from Galilee transmuted by Roman imagination, Roman statesmanship. The Saintly Ideal lay on them like a spell: earth existed but to die in, life was given but to pray for death. Rome taught the Saxon and the Jute that all they had hitherto prayed for, glory in battle, earthly power and splendour, must be renounced, and become but as the sound of bells from a city buried deep beneath the ocean. Instead of defiance, Rome taught them reverence; instead of pride, self-abasement; instead of the worship of delight, the worship of sorrow. In this faith the Saxon and the Jute strove with tragic seriousness to live. But the old faith died hard, or lived on

side by side with the new, far into the Middle Age. Literature reflects the inner struggles of the period: the war-song of Brunanburh, the mystic light which hangs upon the verses of Cædmon, the melancholy of Cynewulf's lyrics. Yet what a contrast is the England delineated by Bede with Visigothic Spain, with Lombard Italy, or Frankish Gaul, as delineated by Gregory of Tours!

Thus these Angles, Jutes, and Saxons, slowly disciplining themselves to the new ideal —to them in the ninth century come the Vikings. They are not less conspicuous in valour, nor less profoundly sensitive to the wonder and mystery of life, the poets in other lands of the Eddas and of the Northern Myths. England as we know it is not yet formed. Amongst the formative influences of English religion and English freedom, and ultimately of this ideal of modern times, must be reckoned the Viking and the Norseman, the followers of Guthrum, of Ivar, of Hrolf, not less than the followers of Cerdic and of Cyndric. To the religious consciousness of the Jutes, Angles, and Saxons, the Vikings bring a religious consciousness as deep and serious. The struggle

against the Danes and Normans is not a struggle of English against foreigners; it is a conflict for political supremacy amongst men of the same race, who ultimately grow together into the England of the fourteenth century. In the light of the future, the struggle of the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries does but continue the conflicts of the Heptarchic kings. To this land of England the Vikings have the right which the followers of Cerdic and Cyndric had—the right of supremacy, the right which the *will* to possess it and the resolution to die for that will, confers.

§ 3. DISTINCTION OF THE RELIGION OF THE VIKINGS

The religion of the Vikings was the converse of their courage. Aristotle remarks profoundly that the race which cannot quit itself like a man in war cannot do any great thing in philosophy. Religion is the philosophy of the warrior. And the scanty records of the Vikings, the character of Knut, for instance, or that of the Conqueror, attest the principle that the thoughts of the valiant

about God penetrate more deeply than the thoughts of the dastard. The Normans, who close the English *Welt-wanderung*, who close the merely formative period of England, illustrate this conspicuously. If the sombre fury of the Winwæd displays the stern depths of religious conviction in the vanguard of our race, if the Eddas and Myths argue a religious earnestness not less deep in the Vikings, the high seriousness of the religious emotion of the Norseman is not less clearly attested. Europe of the eleventh century, for instance, holds three men, each of heroic proportions, each a Teuton in blood—Hildebrand, Robert Guiscard, and William the Conqueror. In intellectual vision, in spiritual insight, Hildebrand has few parallels in history. He is the founder of the Mediæval Papacy, realising in its orders of monks, priests, and crusaders a State, not without singular resemblances to that which Plato pondered. Like Napoleon and like Buonarotti, Hildebrand had the power, during the execution of one gigantic design, of producing others of not less astonishing vastness, to reinforce or supplant the first should it fail. One of his designs originated in the

impression which Norman genius made upon him. It was to transform this race, the tyrants of the Baltic and the English seas, the dominators of the Mediterranean and the Aegean, into omnipresent emissaries and soldiers of the theocratic State whose centre was Rome. But the vastness of his original design broke even the mighty will of Hildebrand; his purpose with regard to the Norseman remains like some abandoned sketch by Buonarotti or Tintoretto. Yet no ruler of men had a profounder knowledge of character, and with the Viking nature circumstance had rendered him peculiarly familiar. The judgment of Orderic and of William of Malmesbury confirms the impression of Hildebrand. But the Normans have been their own witnesses, the cathedrals which they raised from the Seine to the Tyne are epics in stone, inspired by no earthly muse, fit emblems of the rock-like endurance and soaring valour of our race.

There is a way of writing the history of Senlac which Voltaire, Thierry, Michelet, and Guizot dote upon, infecting certain English historians with their complacency, as if the Norse Vikings were the descendants of Chlodovech, and the conquest of England were the

glory of France. The absurdity was crowned in 1804, when Napoleon turned the attention of his subjects to the history of 1066, as an auspicious study for the partners of his great enterprise against the England of Pitt! How many Franks, one asks, followed the red banner of the Bastard to Senlac, or, leaning on their shields, watched the coronation at Westminster? Nor was it in the valley of the Seine that the Norsemen acquired their genius for religion, for government, for art. To the followers of Hrolf the empire of Charlemagne had the halo which the Empire of Rome had to the followers of Alaric, and in that spirit they adopted its language and turned its laws to their own purposes. But Jutes and Angles and Saxons, Ostmen and Danes, were, if less assiduous, not less earnest pupils in the same school as the Norsemen: to all alike, the remnant of the Frankish realm of Charles lay nearest, representing Rome and the glory of the Cæsars. Nature and her affinities drew the Normans to the West, across the salt plains whither for six hundred years the most adventurous of their own blood had preceded them. They closed the move-

ment towards the sunset which Jute and Saxon began; they are the last, the youngest, and in politics the most richly gifted; yet in other departments of human activity not more richly gifted than their kindred who produced Cynewulf and Cædmon, Aidan and Bede, Coifi and Dunstan. And who shall affirm from what branch of the stock the architects of the sky-searching cathedrals sprang?

Senlac is thus in the line of Heptarchic battles; it is the last struggle for the political supremacy over all England amongst those various sections of the Northern races who in the way of six hundred years make England, and who in their religious and political character lay the unseen foundations of Imperial Britain.

Two traits of the Norman character impress the greatest of their contemporary historians, William of Malmesbury—the Norman love of battle and the Norman love of God. Upon these two ideas the history of the Middle Age turns. The crusader, the monk, the troubadour, the priest, the mystic, the dreamer and the saint, the wandering scholar and the scholastic philosopher, all derive thence. Chivalry is

born. The knight beholds in his lady's face on earth the image of Our Lady in Heaven, the Virgin-Mother of the Redeemer of men. From the grave of his dead mistress Ramon Lull withdraws to a hermit's cell to ponder the beauty that is imperishable; and over the grave of Beatrice, Dante rears a shrine, a temple more awful, more sublime than any which even that age has carved in stone.

Into this theatre of tossing life, the nation which the followers of Cerdic and Knut and of William the Conqueror have formed, enters greatly. In thought, in action, in art, something of the mighty *rôle* which the future centuries reserve for her is portended. The immortal energy, the love of war, the deep religious fervour of England find in the Crusades, as by God's own assignment, the task of her heart's desire. We have but to turn to the churches of England, to study the Templars carved upon their sepulchres, to know that in that great tournament of the world the part of the Franks, if the noisier and more continuous, was not more earnest. How singular is the chance, if it be chance, which confronts the followers of the new faith with

a Penda, and the followers of the crescent with a Richard Lion-heart! Upon the shifting Arabic imagination he alone of the infidels exercises enduring sway. The hero of Tasso has no place in Arab history, but the memory of Richard is there imperishably. Richard's services to England are not the theme of common praise, yet, if we estimate the greatness of a king by another standard than roods of conquered earth, or roods of parchment blackened with unregarded statutes, Richard I., crusader and poet, must be reckoned amongst the greatest of his great line, and his name to the Europe of the Middle Age was like the blast of a trumpet announcing the England of the years to come.

§ 4. WORLD-HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ENGLISH REFORMATION

The crusader of the twelfth century follows the saint of an earlier age, and in the thirteenth, England, made one in political and constitutional ideals, attains a source of profounder religious unity. The consciousness that not to Rome, but to Galilee itself she may turn for the way,

the truth, the light, has arisen. In the steady development, in the ever-deepening power of this consciousness, lies the unwritten history of the English Reformation. The race resolves no more to trust to other witness, but with its own eyes to look upon the truth.

Political history has its effect upon the growth of this conviction. In the fourteenth century, for instance, the Papacy is at Avignon. Edward I. in the beginning of that century withstands Boniface VIII., the last great pontiff in whom the temper and resolution of Hildebrand appear, as William the Conqueror had withstood Gregory VII. The statute of *praemunire*, a generation later, prepares the way for Wyclif. The Papacy is now but an appanage of the Valois monarchs. How shall England, conqueror of those monarchs at Creçy and on other fields, reverence Rome, the dependent of a defeated antagonist?

The same bright energy of the soul, the same awe, rooted in the blood of our race, which manifest themselves in the early and Middle Ages, determine the character of the religious history of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the fifteenth century,

suffering and the presence of suffering, the law of tragedy of which we have spoken, add their transforming power to spiritual life. As in political life, the sympathy with the wrongs of others grows into imaginative justice, so sympathy with the faiths of others, which springs from the consciousness of the first great illusion lost, and sorrow for a vanished ideal, grows into tolerance for the creeds and religions of others. For only a race deep-centred in its own faith, yet sensitive to the faith that is in others, can understand the religion of others; only such a race can found an empire characterised at once by freedom and by faith.

The very ardour of the belief of the race in the ideal from Rome—a Semitic ideal, transmuted by Roman genius and policy—swept the Teutonic imagination beyond the ideal, seeking its sources where Rome herself had sought them. This is the impulse which binds the whole English Reformation, the whole movement of English religious thought from Wyclif to Cromwell and Milton, to Wordsworth and Carlyle. It is this common impulse of the race which Henry VIII. relies upon, and because he is in this their leader the English people forgets

his absolutism, his cruel anger, his bloody revenges.

The character of the English Reformation after the first tumultuous conflicts, the fierce essays of royal theocracy and Jesuit reactionism, set steadily towards Liberty of Conscience.

This spirit is glorified in Puritanism, the true heroic age of the Reformation. It appears, for example, in Oliver Cromwell himself. Cromwell is one of the disputed figures in our history, and every English historian has drawn his own Cromwell. But to foreign historians we may look for a judgment less partial, less personal. Dr. Döllinger, for instance, to whom wide sympathy and long and profound study of history have given the right, which can only be acquired by vigil and fasting, to speak about the characters of the past—he who by his position as Romanist is no pledged admirer, describes Cromwell as the "prophet of Liberty of Conscience."[2] This is the deliberate judg-

[2] Döllinger's characterisation of Cromwell is remarkable—"Aber er (*i.e.* Cromwell) hat, zuerst unter den Mächtigen, ein religiöses Princip aufgestellt und, soweit sein Arm reichte, zur Geltung gebracht, welches, im Gegensatz gegen die grossen historischen Kirchen und gegen den Islam, Keim und Stoff zu einer abgesonderten Religion in sich trug:—das Princip der Gewissensfreiheit, der Verwerfung alles religiösen Zwanges." Proceeding to expand this idea, Döllinger again describes

ment of Döllinger. It was the judgment of the peasants of the Vaudois two hundred and fifty years ago! Somewhat the same impression was made by Cromwell upon Voltaire, Victor Hugo, and Guizot.

Again in the seventeenth century, in the *Irene* of Drummond, and in the remarkable work of Barclay, the *Argenis*,[3] in its whole conception of the religious life, of monasticism, as in its idealisation of the character of the great

Cromwell as the annunciator of the doctrine of the inviolability of conscience, so vast in its significance to the modern world, and adds—"Es war damals von weittragender Bedeutung, dass der Beherrscher eines mächtigen Reiches diese neue Lehre verkündete, die dann noch fast anderthalb Jahrhunderte brauchte, bis sie in der öffentlichen Meinung so erstarkte, dass auch ihre noch immer zahlreichen Gegner sich vor ihr beugen müssen. Die Evangelische Union, welche jetzt zwei Welttheile umfasst und ein früher unbekanntes und für unmöglich gehaltenes Princip der Einigung verschiedener Kirchen glücklich verwirklicht hat, darf wohl Cromwell als ihren Propheten und vorbereitenden Gründer betrachten."—*Akademische Vorträge*, 1891, vol. iii. pp. 55, 56.

[3] The *Argenis* was published in 1621; but amongst the ideas on religion, carefully elaborated or obscurely suggested, which throng its pages, we find curious anticipations of the position of Locke and even of Hume, just as in politics, in the remarks on elective monarchy put in the lips of the Cardinal Ubaldini, or in the conceptions of justice and law, Barclay reveals a sympathy with principles which appealed to Algernon Sidney or were long afterwards developed by Beccaria. In the motion of the stars Barclay sees the proof of the existence of God, and requires no other. The *Argenis*, unfortunately for English literature, was written at a time when men still wavered between the vernacular and Latin as a medium of expression.

Henri Quatre, you find the same desire for a wider ideal, not less in religion than in politics. We encounter it later in Shaftesbury and in Locke. It is the essential thought of the work of Thomas Hobbes. It is supremely and beautifully expressed in Algernon Sidney, the martyr of constitutional freedom and of tolerance.

And what is the faith of Algernon Sidney? One who knew him well, though opposed to his party, said of him, "He regards Christianity as a kind of divine philosophy of the mind." Community of religious not less than of political aims binds closer the friendship of Locke and Shaftesbury. In the preparation of a constitution for the Carolinas they found the opportunity which Corsica offered to Rousseau. In the *Letters on Toleration*[4] Locke did

[4] The spirit and tendency of Locke's work appear in the short preface to the English version of the Latin *Epistola de Tolerantia*, which had already met with a general approbation in France and Holland (1689). "This narrowness of spirit on all sides has undoubtedly been the principal occasion of our miseries and confusions. But whatever has been the occasion, it is now high time to seek for a thorough cure. We have need of more generous remedies than what have yet been made use of in our distemper. It is neither declarations of indulgence, nor acts of comprehension, such as have yet been practised, or projected amongst us, that can do the work. The first will but palliate, the second increase our evil. Absolute Liberty, just and true Liberty, equal and impartial Liberty, is the thing that we

but expand the principles upon which, with Shaftesbury's aid, he elaborated the government of the new State. The Record Office has no more precious document than the draught of that work, the margins covered with corrections in the handwriting of these two men, the one the greatest of the Restoration statesmen, the other ranking amongst the greatest speculative thinkers of his own or any age. One suggested formula after another is traceable there, till at length the decision is made, that from the citizens of the new State shall be exacted, not adherence to this creed or to that, but simply the declaration, "There is a God." Algernon Sidney aids Penn in performing a similar task for Pennsylvania, and their joint work is informed by the same spirit as the "Constitutions" of Locke and Shaftesbury.

Thus in religion the men of the seventeenth century occupy a position analogous to their position in politics, already delineated. In

stand in need of." The second Letter, styled "A Second Letter concerning Toleration," is dated May 27, 1690 — the year of the publication of his *Essay on the Human Understanding*; the third, the longest, and in some respects the most eloquent, "A Third Letter for Toleration," bears the date June 20, 1692.

politics, as we have seen, they establish a constitutional government, and make sure the path to the wider freedom of the future. In religion they fix the principles of that philosophic tolerance which the later centuries develop and apply. Both in politics and in religion they turn aside from the mediæval imperialism of Bourbon and Hapsburg, consciously or unconsciously preparing the foundations of the Imperialism of to-day.

If the divines, scholars, poets, and wits who met and talked under the roof of the young Lord Falkland at Tew, represent in their religious and civil perplexities the spirit of the seventeenth century, within the intersecting circles of Pope and Bolingbroke, Swift and Addison, may be found in one form or another all the varied impulses of the eighteenth—intellectual, political, scientific, literary, or religious. England had succeeded to the place which Holland filled in the days of Descartes and Spinoza,—the refuge of the oppressed, the home of political and religious freedom, the study of Montesquieu, the asylum of Voltaire.[5]

[5] Voltaire ridiculed certain peculiarities of Shakespeare when mediocre French writers and critics began to find in his "barbarities"

Yet between the England of the eighteenth and the England of the seventeenth century there is no such deep gulf fixed as Carlyle at one period of his literary activity imagined. The one is the organic inevitable growth of the other. The England which fought at Blenheim, Fontenoy, and Quebec is the same England as fought at Marston Moor and Dunbar. Chatham rescued it from a deeper abasement than that into which it had fallen in the days of the Cavalier parliaments, and it followed him to heights unrecked of by Cromwell. Nor is the religious character of the century less profound, less earnestly reverent, when rightly studied. Even its scepticism, its fiery denials, or vehement inquiry,—a Woolston's, for instance, or a Cudworth's, like a Shelley's or a James

an excuse for irreverence at the expense of Racine, but he never tires of reiterating his admiration for the country of Locke and Hume, of Bolingbroke and Newton. A hundred phrases could be gathered from his correspondence extending over half a century, in which this finds serious or extravagant utterance. Even in the last decades of his life, when he sees the France of the future arising, he writes to Madame Du Deffand: "How trivial we are compared with the Greeks, the Romans, and the English"; and to Helvétius, about the same period (1765), he admits the profound debts which France and Europe owe to the adventurous thought of England. He even forces Frederick the Great into reluctant but definite acquiescence with his enthusiasm—"Yes, you are right; you French have grace, the English have the depth, and we Germans, we have caution."

Thomson's[6] long afterwards,—spring from no love of darkness, but from the immortal ardour for the light, for Truth, even if there come with it silence and utter death. And from this same ardour arises that extraordinary outburst of varied intellectual and religious effort, critical or constructive, which makes the Revolutionary and the Georgian eras comparable in energy, if not in height of speculative inquiry, to the great period of the *Aufklärung* in Germany. Kant acknowledged his indebtedness to Hume. Rousseau, Voltaire, Condillac, and Helvétius are in philosophic theory but pupils of Locke.

Towards the close of the century appeared Gibbon's great work, the *Decline and Fall*, a prose epic in seventy-one books, upon the last victories, the last triumphs, and the long, reluctant death-struggles of the Roman Empire, the insidious advance of inner decay, the ever-renewed assaults of foreign violence, the Goth,

[6] James Thomson, who distinguished himself from the author of the *Seasons*, and defined his own literary aims by the initials B. V., *i.e.* Bysshe Vonalis (Novalis), though possessing neither the wide scholarship nor the depth of thought of Leopardi, occasionally equals the great Italian in felicity of phrase and in the poignant expression of the world-sorrow. Several of the more violent pamphlets on religious themes ascribed to him are of doubtful authenticity. He died in 1882, the year after the death of Carlyle.

the Saracen, the Mongol, and at the close, the leaguering lines of Mahomet, the farewell to the Greeks of the last of the Constantines, the Ottomans in the palaces of the Cæsars, and the melancholy musings of an Italian scholar over the ruins on the Seven Hills. An epic in prose,—and every one of its books might be compared to the gem-encrusted hilt of a sword, and each wonderfully wrought jewel is a sentence; but the point of the sword, like that of the cherubim, is everywhere turned against superstition, bigotry, and religious wrong.

David Hume's philosophy was more read[7]

[7] Hume's disappointment at the reception accorded to the first quarto of his *History of England* must be measured by the standard of the hopes he had formed. Conscious of genius, and not without ambition, he had reached middle life nameless, and save in a narrow circle unacknowleged. But the appearance of his *History*, two years later than his *Political Discourses*, was synchronous with the darkest hours in English annals since 1667. An English fleet had to quit the Channel before the combined navies of France and Spain; Braddock was defeated at Fort Duquesne; Minorca was lost. At this period the tide of ill-feeling between the Scotch and the English ran bitter and high. The taunts of individuals were but the explosions of a resentment deep-seated and strong. London had not yet forgotten the panic which the march of the Pretender had roused. To the Scottish nation the massacre at Culloden seemed an act of revenge,—savage, premeditated, and impolitic. The ministry of Chatham changed all this. He raised an army from the clans who ten years before had marched to the heart of England; ended the privileges of the coterie of Whig families, bestowing the posts of danger and power not upon the fearless but frequently incapable sons of the great houses, but upon the talent bred

in France than in Scotland or England, but Hume wrote one book here widely read, his *History of England.* It has been superseded, but it did what it aimed at doing. There are certain books which, when they have done their work, are forgotten, the *Dialectique* of Ramus, for instance. This is not to be regretted. Hume's *History of England* is one of these books. For nearly four generations it was the only History of England that English men and women read. It was impossible that a man like Hume, the central principle of whose life was the same as that of Locke, Shaftesbury, Gibbon—the desire for a larger freedom for man's thought—it was impossible for him to write without saturating every page with that

in the ranks of English merchants. Hume's work was thus caught in the stream of Chatham's victories, and a ray from the glory of the nation was reflected upon its historian. The general verdict was ratified by the concord of the best judgments. Gibbon despaired of rivalling its faultless lucidity; Burke turned from a projected History to write in Hume's manner the events of the passing years, founding the *Annual Register.* Its outspoken Toryism was welcome to a generation weary of the "Venetian oligarchy," this epoch, if any, meriting Beaconsfield's epithet. The work had the fortune which Gibbon and Montesquieu craved for their own—it was read in the boudoir as much as in the study. Nor did its power diminish. It contained the best writing, the deepest thought, the most vivid portraiture, devoted to men and things English, over a continuous period, until the works of Carlyle and Macaulay.

purpose, and it was impossible that three generations could read that *History* without being insensibly, unconsciously transformed, their aspirations elevated, their judgments moulded by contact with such a mind as that of Hume.

Recently the work of the great intellects of these two centuries bears fruit in our changed attitude towards Ireland, in the emancipation of the Catholics there; in our changed attitude towards the Jews, towards the peoples of India, towards Islam. Edward Gibbon and Hume laid the foundation of that college which is rising at Khartoum to-day for the teaching of Mohammedanism under the Queen. It was not only Lord Kitchener who built it; John Locke, John Milton built it.

The saint, the crusader, the monk, reformer, puritan, and nonjuror lead in unbroken succession to the critic, the speculative thinker, the analytic or synthetic philosophy of the eighteenth and the present century, these representing Imperial Britain, as the former represent national or feudal England. Erigena in the ninth century surveying all things as from a tall rock, Dunstan, Roger Bacon

wasting in a prison "through the incurable stupidity of the world," as he briefly explains it, Michael Scott, Hooker, Bacon, Glanvil, Milton, and Locke, formed by England, these men have in turn guided or informed the highest aspirations, the very heart of the race. The greatest empire in the annals of mankind is at once the most earnestly religious and the most tolerant. Her power is deep-based as the foundations of the rocks, her glance wide as the boundaries of the world, far-searching as the æons of time.

Yet it is not only from within, but from without, that this transformation in the spirit of England has been effected; not only from within by the work of a Sidney, a Gibbon, but from without by the influence, imperceptible yet sure, of the faiths and creeds of the Oriental peoples she conquers. The work of the Arabists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, such men as the Pocockes, father and son, Ockley and Sale, supplements or expands the teaching of Locke and of Hume. The industry of Ross, the enthusiastic studies of Sir William Jones, brought the power of Persian and Indian thought to bear upon the English

mind, and the efforts of all these men seem to converge in one of the greatest literary monuments of the present century — *The Sacred Books of the East.*

Thus then we have seen this immortal "energy of the soul" in religion and thought, as in politics, manifest itself in like aspirations towards imaginative freedom, the higher freedom and the higher justice, summed in the phrase "Elargissez Dieu," that man's soul, dowered with the unfettered use of all its faculties, may set towards the lodestar of its being, harmony with the Divine, whether it be through freedom in religious life or in political life or in any other form of life. For all life, all being, is organic, ceaselessly transformed, ceaselessly transforming, ceaseless action and interaction, like that vision of Goethe's of the golden chalices ascending and descending perpetually between heaven and this dark earth of ours.

§ 5. IRELAND, SCOTLAND, AND IMPERIALISM

And now let me touch briefly the question, "What is the part of these two peoples of Ireland and Scotland in this Imperial Britain?"

We have already seen how England and Scotland were fused together by that mutual renunciation of the seventeenth century. Then the one nation says to the other, as in the Hebrew apologue, "Let your kings come down and rule over us." There is an antique greatness in that act of England's, turning to her old enemy who had so often beaten her, who had so often been beaten by her. And as the century advances, whether in Montrose's campaign, in the passionate adherence to the ancient house of Stuart, or at Dunbar, or in the Covenanters, Scotland exhibits a spirit similar to that of English Puritanism—the courage to die for an ideal. And what is the work of the poets, thinkers, and writers of Scotland in the later centuries? What is the work, for instance, of Drummond, of Urquhart,[8] of Hume, of James Thomson, of Hamilton, Reid, Dugald Stewart, and Macaulay, and of

[8] In the countryman of Dunbar and Burns, Rabelais found a fit translator, and his version (1653) made Pantagruel famous in England at a time when in Voltaire's bitter but exaggerated reflection he was for his daring just tolerated in France. Urquhart's writings are almost entirely conceived in a Rabelaisian spirit. Criticism misses the point when it takes *au serieux* such works as *Pantochronochanon*, a Gargantuesque extravagance on Urquhart's own family, or the *Ecsqubalauron*, a similar flight on the virtue of Urquhart's nation.

the mightier names of Burns, Carlyle, and Scott? What is their work in the growth of this Imperial Britain but the work of Milton and Bolingbroke—a truceless war against tyranny, civic and religious, and an unresting endeavour towards the same lofty ends? And in 1776, the very year in which George III. was pledging England to the fatal war that lost America, a Scotchman, Adam Smith, in his *Wealth of Nations*, founded the economics of Imperialism. Pitt the younger, Peel, and Cobden were pupils of the same great master.

Thus, in a manner notable enough, has Scotland aided in the structure of an Empire, literally unparalleled in history, an Empire beneath whose sovereign sway the trader from any land may uncord his bales on all her shores, unhindered, the devout of every land pray to God in his own accents, unafraid!

But of Ireland, what shall one say of Ireland? and how avoid tedium in any effort to tell again the dismal old story, tedious, yet sad withal as their national song, which even on a barrel organ it is hard to listen to without tears, a song wrung from the heart of a people burdened with a secular wrong.—The insults,

the neglect of Plantagenet princes; the bitter statutes of the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries, the bitter persecution of the sixteenth; then Strafford, Leicester, Ormonde,—Trera's wail of bloody anguish, the tyranny of English kings followed by the tyranny of English parliaments; then Limerick pacification, and some twenty thousand resentful hearts self-exiled,—the Dantesque wrath, the more than Dantesque irony of Swift's terrible pamphlet, Grattan's prophetic denunciations, the turpitudes of the Union; Castlereagh scourged by Byron—"dabbling his sleek young hands in Erin's gore"—the ignominious struggle of the Emancipation; the reluctant concession or rash adventure of recent times—what a record of misery it all is!—

> Quis talia fando
> Myrmidonum Dolopumve aut duri miles Ulixi
> temperet a lacrimis?

The Past is past, irrevocable; "Done are fate's ordinances," as Aeschylus insists,—but out of that past what testimony arises to the present, what testimony to this Imperial Britain that it is our effort here to analyse into its constituents? The testimony is clear enough;

Ireland is there as England's inheritance from the days of her blindness, her insolence, ὕβρις, as Sophocles would say,—"the seed of the tyrant," a heritage from the days when as yet she knew not the path of empire, the path of her peace. "Policy of non-interference"! It was because England would *not* interfere, then in the bad old days of the Pale, would not give the law, the ordered control, the civic peace that she herself possessed, that Ireland is what it is to-day. It is there, this heritage from the past, there (shall I say?), like the dead albatross, in Coleridge's poem, tied to the neck of its slayer. Ireland,—with all its impetuosities, its sunbright fervour, its starry radiance, its utter fearlessness in war, its gallantry, its dreadful courage, its anguish,—we have bruised its pride, dashed its illusions, its trust in us, destroyed its hopes, envenomed the wounds that, as if never weary in ill-doing, we wrongly inflicted! But the curse is not for ever. Let but England pray! Let her find by prayer the secret of the tears that burst from the oppressed heart of the slayer, let her find by prayer that μετάνοια, that "new-souledness," as Martin Luther vehemently affirms the Greek of St. Paul

should be rendered. And are there not signs plain to be read in the sky that England knows this, feels this? I know in history few incidents more moving than the incident of these last weeks,—the Mother of Nations calling to her knees the children, the new generation, in tacit appeal, "Between our fathers and your fathers, there is an old feud, an ancient wrong,—be it yours to forget that wrong!" Let but England pray; and in the life of a race, a city, a people, what is prayer save the resolve, silent or earnestly uttered,—what is it save the resolve to pursue the path of its destiny, its pre-appointed path, more nobly, more reverently—the path to the larger freedom, the higher justice? For, after all, what are Ireland's defeats but want of politic wisdom? The heart of the race is sound; and the wound to her pride has a remedy—but not in national independence. That is no remedy.

National independence? England in the beginning of the seventeenth century herself gave up her national independence for the sake of loftier than national ends. "Give Ireland national independence?" It is the one thing that, as a Roman poet says, the gods them-

selves cannot bestow! It is an attribute of a quality too rare to be bought or sold, given or received! In the marts of Fate there is but one coin with which *that* may be purchased,—it is blood,—such as was shed at Marathon, at Morgarten, at Bannockburn! You might as well try to restore honour to the man who in the lists of life has forfeited honour, as seek to *restore* national independence to a proud people that in the hour of trial has lost it! *Restore* Ireland's independence? Would to God one could! No, that is not the lesson of history, that is not the testimony of the Past.

There is a widespread belief in men's minds that every race must have its period of world-dominion. History does not ratify such a belief. The deserts of the Past are strewn with the wrecks of nations that never had their day of power at all; there are races around us to whom the day of power will never come. It is said, for instance, that Russia must have her day, and Germany. History does not say so. The genius for empire in a race is like the genius for art in the individual, innate, but not innate in all. One has it, another has it not. It is a

gift from the great God Himself, as Polybius knew, as Tacitus, Dante, Machiavelli knew,—as every man who studies history knows.

The Celts 2300 years ago, marching against Rome, and led by the Brennus of their host, met and defeated the Romans on the Allia. Rome capitulated, but in ashes,—the one surrender until that to Alaric, eight centuries later, when the day of Rome's destiny was setting. The hour of ransom and indemnity to the Celts came, and then it was that the Romans indignant protested that they were acting towards the vanquished—not with justice! The scales were false! It is a slight matter, yet so consonant with the after history of the Celtic peoples that it is indicative of a great. The Celts, incapable in modern times of the realisation, at least in politics, of an ideal which in its grandeur requires the renunciation of all else, were incapable then also. It was a moment in their history, most fateful. Rome, and the future might of Rome, lay prostrate; yet in the crisis the Celts trafficked with false weights—"*væ victis*, the vanquished must suffer"! That is not how a race destined to empire acts in the supreme moments of its history.

Combativeness does not imply the genius for war, and with all its capacities for art and poetry, the Celtic race has never yielded to the sway nor felt in its heart the tyranny of a great political ideal. In politics, the clan; in war, the skirmish, the quarrels of tribal chiefs, represent the aspirations and the attainment of Celtic life. Matthew Arnold's pathetic refrain upon Celtic warfare—"They always went to the wars, and always came back conquered, but never knew that they were conquered"—loses in the light of history something of its sentimental poignancy. The Celts' refusal to recognise defeat springs not from a more desperate valour than that of Roman or Teuton; but taking up arms without the inspiration of a great cause, they lay them down without reluctance, and are vanquished without regret. They go to war seeking nothing; conquered, they are not downcast, for they have lost nothing. Undismayed by the repulse of yesterday, they renew the combat to-day with equal ardour and with equal levity.

In the political history of France as of Ireland, its failures or its successes, nationalism, republicanism, monarchism, imperialism, the

ineffaceable traits of the original stock assert themselves with startling vividness and fidelity. To a supremacy in art which recalls Hellas and the glory of Athens, France at moments unites a political action which recalls the Scythians. In the actual history of Ireland during the past century and a half, whether we follow Mr. Froude, rancorously exaggerative, or Mr. Lecky, insinuatingly apologetic, anxiously impartial, indefatigably just, the qualities inherent in the race declare themselves not less vividly. But England, attaining at last across the centuries the full consciousness of her own destiny, has attained also the power of sympathy with the destiny of others. The genius of Ireland,—the genius of the Celtic race, which gave the Cæsars their chosen legions, and lights up in the Panegyrici the last epochs of Roman literature, and later, yields inspiration of the *Parzival* to Wolfram, and of his Chronicle to Geoffrey,—the genius of Ireland, too long dazed and sterilised by inveterate wrong and just resentment, will live again, not in the perverse pursuit of that which by nature and the ground-plan of the world can never be, but in the deeper recognition of that which is.

But before me in the future I see a temple arise, turrets and domes, raised to another ideal than this of Nationality, and within it gathered the sons of these two races, their ancient wrongs no more remembered, thrust aside by the mightier task pursued in common, on battlefields and in council-chambers, in civic peace or in imperial war, both swayed by one resolve, by one great purpose,—to bring to all peoples of this Empire, races of kindred or of alien blood, of kindred or of alien faiths, and to the generations of their own blood and their own faith that shall come after,—to bring to these that larger freedom, that higher justice, for which the dead of our race have striven! Together they move towards this great end, resolute, scorning even the hazard of war,—if their onward path is deeply threatened, even at the hazard of war, and heedless of the coalised outcry of a misunderstanding or an envious world, that, like other outcries, will so swiftly fall, die,—or be tempered to reverence, reluctant or eager, silent or loud!

This, then, is the testimony of the past, and there is the remedy for Ireland's wrongs, in this consecration, this mutual devotion to a

great ideal. *There* is the nepenthe for the past, which no artificial nationality, no eleemosynary independence can ever bestow.

§ 6. THE TESTIMONY OF THE PAST: A FINAL CONSIDERATION

Before leaving this part of our subject, the testimony of the past, there is one more question to consider, though with brevity. The great empires or imperial races of the past, Hellas, Rome, Egypt, Persia, Islam, represents each a distinct ideal,—in each a separate aspect of the human soul, as the characterising attribute of the race, seems incarnate. In Hellas, for example, it is Beauty, *τὸ καλόν*; in Rome, it is Power; in Egypt, Mystery, as embodied in her temples, half-underground, or in the Sphinx that guards the sepulchres of her kings; whilst in Persia Beauty and Aspiration seem to unite in that mystic curiosity which is the feature at once of her religion, her architecture, her laws, of Magian ritual and Gnostic theurgy. Other races possess these qualities, love of beauty, the sense of mystery; but in Hellas and in

Egypt they differentiate the race and all the sections of the race.

What characteristic, then, common to the whole Teutonic race, does this Empire of Britain represent? Apart altogether from its individual ideal, political or religious, what attribute of the race, distinguishing it from other races, the Hellenic, the Roman, the Persian, does it eminently possess?

Compare, first of all, the beginnings of the people of England with the beginnings of the Hellenic people, or better, perhaps, with the beginnings of Rome. Who founded the Roman state? There is one fact about which the most recent authorities agree with the most ancient, that Rome was founded much as Athens was founded, by desperate men from every city, district, region, in Italy. The outlaw, the refugee from justice or from private vengeance, the landless man and the homeless man,—these gathered in the "Broad Plain," or migrated together to the Seven Hills, and by the very extent of the walls which they traced, marked the plan which the Rome of the Cæsars filled in. This process may have extended over a century,—over two centuries;

Rome drawing to itself ever new bands of adventurers, desperate in valour and in fortune as the first. Who are the founders of England, of Imperial Britain? They are those "co-seekers," *conquæstores*, I have spoken of, who came with Cerdic and with Cynric, the chosen men, that is to say, the most adventurous, most daring, most reckless—the fittest men of the whole Teutonic kindred; and not for two centuries merely, but for six centuries, this "land of the Angles," stretching from the Forth and Clyde to the Channel, from Eadwine's Burgh to Andredeswald, draws to itself, and is gradually ever peopled closer and closer with, Vikings and Danes, Norsemen and Ostmen, followers of Guthrum, and followers of Hrolf, followers of Ivar and followers of William I. They come in "hundreds," they come in thousands. Into England as into some vast crucible, the valour of the earth pours itself for six hundred years, till, molten and fused together, it arises at last one and undivided, the English Nation. Such was the foundation, such the building of the Empire, and these are the title-deeds which even in its first beginnings this land can show.

And of the inner race character as repre-

sentative of the whole Teutonic kindred, the testimony is not less sure. What a heaven of light falls upon the Hellas of the Isles, that period of its history which does not begin, but ends with the Iliad and with the Odyssey—works that sum up an old civilisation! Already is born that beauty which, whether in religion, or in art, or in life, Hellas made its own forever. And it is not difficult to trace back the descent of the ideal of Virgil and of Cicero to the shepherds and outlaws of the Seven Hills. The infinite curiosity of Persia, the worshipper of flame, is anticipated on its earliest monuments, and the mystery of Egypt is coeval with its first appearance in history. But of England and the Teutonic race what shall one say? A characteristic universal in Teutonic history is the extent to which the speculative or metaphysical pervades the practical, the political, and social conditions of life. Freedom and deathless courage are its inheritance; but these throughout its history are accompanied by certain vaguer tendencies of thought and aspiration, the touch of things unseen, those impulses beyond the finite towards the Infinite, which display themselves so conspicuously in later ages. In

the united power of these two worlds, the visible and the invisible, upon the Teutonic imagination, in this alternate sway of Reality and Illusion, must be sought the characteristic of this race. In the Faust legend, which, in one form or another, the race has made its own, it attains a supreme embodiment. In the Oriental imagination the sense of the transiency of life passes swiftly into a disdain for life itself, and displays itself in a courage which arises less from hope than from apathy or despair. But the death-defiant courage of the Viking springs from no disdain of life, but from the scorn of death, hazarding life rather than the hope upon which his life is set.

This characteristic can be traced throughout the range of Teutonic art and Teutonic literature, and even in action. The spirit which originates the *Welt-wanderung*, for instance, reppears in the half-unconscious impulses, the instinctive bent of the race, which lead the brave of Europe generation by generation for two hundred years, to the crusades. They found the grave empty, but the craving of the heart was stayed, the yearning towards Asgard, the sun-bright eastern land, where were Balder

and the Anses, and the rivers and meadows unfading, whence ages ago their race had journeyed to the forest-gloom and mists by the Danube and the Rhine, by Elbe and Thames.

Thus then as Beauty is impersonated in Hellas, Mystery in Egypt, so this attribute which we may name Reverie is impersonated in the Teutonic race.

And in the Anglo-Saxon branch of the great Teutonic kindred, this attribute, this Reverie, the divided sway of the actual and of the dream-world, attests its presence and its power from the earliest epochs. It has left its impress, its melancholy, its restlessness, its infinite regret, upon the verse of Cynewulf and Cædmon, whilst in the devotion of the saint, the scholar, the hermit, and of much of the common life of the time, to the ideal of Calvary, its presence falls like a mystic light upon the turbulence and battle-fury of the eighth and ninth centuries. It adds the glamour as from a distant and enchanted past to chivalrous romance, and to the crusader's and the pilgrim's high endeavour. It cast its spell upon the Tudor mariners and made the ocean their inheritance. In later times it reappears as the world-impulse

which has made our race a native of every climate, yet jealous of its traditions, proud of its birth, unsubdued by its environment.

If in the circuit they marked out for the walls of early Rome, its first founders seemed to anticipate the eternal city, so on the high seas the founders of England, Jute, Viking, and Norseman seem to foreshadow the Empire of the World, and by the surge or in the forest solitude, already to meditate the terror, the sorrow, and the mystery, and the coming harmonies, of *Faustus* and *Lear*, of *Hamlet* and *Adonais*.

PART II

THE DESTINY OF IMPERIAL BRITAIN

LECTURE IV

THE WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA

[Tuesday, 29th May 1900.]

HITHERTO we have been engaged with the past, with the slow growth across the centuries of those political or religious ideals which now control the destinies of this Empire, a movement towards an ever higher conception of man's relations towards the Divine, towards other men, and towards the State. To-day a subject of more pressing interest confronts us, but a subject more involved also in the prejudices and sympathies which the violence of pity or anger, surprise or alarm, arouse, woven more closely to the living hopes, regrets, and fears which compose the instant of man's life. We are in the thick of the deed—how are we to judge it? How conjure the phantoms inimical to truth, which Tacitus found besetting his path

as he prepared to narrate the civil struggles of Galba and Otho thirty years after the event?

Yet one aspect of the subject seems free and accessible, and to this aspect I propose to direct your attention. The separate incidents of the war, and the actions of individuals, statesmen, soldiers, politicians, journalists, and officials, civil or military, the wisdom or the rashness, the energy or the sloth, the wavering or the resolution, ancient experience grown half prophetic with the years, alert vigour, quick to perceive, unremitting in pursuit, or ingenuous surprise tardily awaking from the dream of a world which is not this,—all these will fall within the domain of History some centuries hence when what men saw has been sifted from what they merely desired to see or imagined they saw.

But the place of the war in the general life of this State, and the purely psychological question, how is the idea of this war, in Plato's sense of that word, related to the idea of Imperial Britain?—these it is possible even now to consider, *sine ira et studio*. What is its historical significance compared with the wars

of the past, what is the presage of this great war—if it be a great war—for the future?

§ 1. THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA

Now the magnitude of a war does not depend upon the numbers relative or absolute, of the opposing forces. Fewer men fell at Salamis than at Towton, and in the battle of Bedr[1] the total force engaged did not exceed two thousand, yet Mohammed's victory changed the history of the world. The followers of Andreas Hofer were but a handful compared with the army which marched with de Saxe to Tournay, but the achievement of the Tyrolese is enduring as Fontenoy. War is the supreme act in the life of a State, and it is the motives which impel, the ideal which is pursued, that determine the greatness or insignificance of that act. It is the cause, the principles in collision which make it for ever glorious, or

[1] The battle of Bedr was fought in the second year of the Hegira, A.D. 624, in a valley near the Red Sea, between Mecca and Medina. The victory sealed the faith not only of his followers but of Mohammed himself in his divine mission. Mohammed refers to this triumph in surah after surah of the Koran, as Napoleon lingers over the memory of Arcola, of Lodi, or Toulon.

swiftly forgotten. What, then, are the principles at issue in the present war?

The war in South Africa, as we saw in the opening lecture, is the first event or series of events upon a great scale, the genesis of which lies in this force named Imperialism. It is the first conspicuous expression of this ideal in the world of action—of heroic action, which now as always implies heroic suffering. No other war in our history is in its origins and its aims so evidently the realisation, so exclusively the result of this imperial ideal. Whatever may have been the passing designs of the Government, lofty or trivial, whatever the motives of individual politicians, this is the cause and this the ideal by which, consciously or unconsciously, the decision of the State has been prescribed and controlled. But the present war is not merely a war for an idea, which of itself would be enough to make the war, in M. Thiers' refrain, *digne de l'attention des hommes*; but, like the wars of the sixteenth century or the French Revolutionary Wars, it is a war between two ideals, between two principles that strike deep into the life-history of modern States.

In the religious wars of the sixteenth

century the principle of freedom was arrayed against the principle of authority. The conflict rolled hither and thither for two centuries, and was illustrated by the valour and genius of Europe, by characters and incidents of imposing grandeur, sublime devotion, or moving pity. So in the war of the French Revolution the dying principle of Monarchism was arrayed against the principle of Democracy, and the tragic heroism with which the combatants represented these principles, whether Austria, Russia, Spain, England, Germany, or France, makes that war one of the most precious memories of mankind.

In the tragedies of art, in stage-drama, the conflict, the struggle is between two principles, two forces, one base, the other exalted. But in the world-drama a conflict of a profounder kind reveals itself, the conflict between heroism and heroism, between ideal and ideal, often equally lofty, equally impressive.

Such is the eternal contrast between the tragic in Art and the tragic in History, and this characteristic of these two great conflicts of the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries reappears in the present war. There also two

principles equally lofty and impressive are at strife—the dying principle of Nationality, and the principle, which for weal or woe, is that of the future, the principle of Imperialism. These are the forces contending against each other on the sterile veldt; this is the first act of the drama whose *dénouement*—who dare foretell? What distant generation shall behold *that* curtain?

§ 2. NATIONALITY AND IMPERIALISM

In political life, in the life-history of states, as in religious, as in intellectual and social history, change and growth, or what we now name Evolution, are perpetual, continuous, unresting. The empire which has ceased to advance has begun to recede. Motion is the law of its being, if not towards a fuller life, motion towards death. Thus in a race dowered with the genius for empire, as Rome was, as Britain is, Imperialism is the supreme, the crowning form, which in this process of evolution it attains. The civic, the feudal, or the oligarchic State passes into the national, the national into the imperial, by slow or swift gradations, but irresistibly, as by a fixed law of

nature. No great statesman is ever in advance of, or ever behind, his age. The patriot is he who is most faithful to the highest form, to the actualised ideal of his time. Eliot in the seventeenth century died for the constitutional rights of a nation; in the thirteenth he would have stood with the feudal lords at Runnymede; in the nineteenth he would have added his great name to imperialism.

The national is thus but a phase in the onward movement of an imperial State, of a race destined to empire. In such a State, Nationality has no peculiar sanctity, no fixed, immutable influence, no absolute sway. The term National, indeed, has recently acquired in politics and in literature something of the halo which in the beginning of the century belonged to the idea of liberty alone. The part which it has played in Bohemia and Hungary, Belgium and Holland, Servia and Bulgaria, and, above all, in the unity of Italy and the realisation after four centuries of Machiavelli's dream, is a living witness of its power. Yet the very conditions under which these States have gained their independence make but clearer how far the idea of Nationality is now

severed from that of Freedom. In the Middle Age these two ideas were inseparable, but with the completion of the State system of Europe, the rise of Prussia and the transformation of the half-oriental Muscovy into the Empire of the Czars, and with the growth in European politics of the Balance-of-Power[2] theory, a disruption occurred between these ideas, and a

[2] Gentz' work on the Balance of Power, *Fragmente aus der neuesten Geschichte des politischen Gleichgewichtes in Europa*, Dresden, 1806, is still, not only from its environment, but from its conviction, the classic on this subject. It gained him the friendship of Metternich, and henceforth he became the constant and often reckless and violent exponent of Austrian principles. But he was sincere. To the charge of being the Aretino of the Holy Alliance, Gentz could retort with Mirabeau that he was paid, not bought. The friendship of Rahel and Varnhagen von Ense acquits him of suspicion. Nor is his undying hostility to the Revolution more surprising than that of Burke, whom he translated, or of Rivarol, whose elusive but studied grace of style he not unsuccessfully imitated. Gentz, who was in his twelfth year at Bunker's Hill, in his twenty-sixth when the Bastille fell, lived just long enough to see the Revolution of 1830 and the flight of Charles X. But the shock of the Revolution of July seemed but a test of the strength of the fabric, which he had aided Metternich to rear. So that as life closed Gentz could look around on a completed task. Napoleon slept at St. Helena, his child, *le fils de l'homme*, was in a seclusion that would shortly end in the grave, Canning was dead and Byron, Heine was in exile, Chateaubriand, a peer; *quotusquisque reliquus qui rempublicam vidisset?* who was there any longer to remember Marengo and Austerlitz, Wagram and Schoenbrunn? And yet exactly seven months and nineteen days after Gentz breathed his last, the first reformed parliament met at Westminster, Jan. 29, 1833, announcing the advent to power of a democracy even mightier than that of 1789.

series of protected nationalities, insolent by forbearance, intrepid by permission, travesty the once dreaded name of National Independence.

Indeed, as we recede from the event, the Revolution of 1848 presents itself ever more definitely as it appeared to certain of its actors, and to a few of the more speculative onlookers, as but an aftermath of 1789 and 1793, as the net return, the practical result to France and to Europe of the glorious sacrifices and hopes of the revolutionary era. Nationality was the occasion and the excuse of 1848; but the ideal was a shadow from the past. The men of that time do not differ more widely from the men of 1789 than Somers and Halifax differ from the great figures of the earlier revolution, Pym, Strafford, and Cromwell.[3] The amazing con-

[3] It is hardly necessary to indicate that allusions to the "glorious but bloodless" revolution of 1688 are unwarranted and pointless when designed to tarnish, by the contrast they imply, the French Revolution of 1789. It was the bloody struggle of 1642-51 that made 1688 possible. The true comparison—if any comparison be possible between revolutions so widely different in their aims and results, though following each other closely in the outward sequence of incident and character — would be between the Puritan struggle and the first revolutionary period in France, and between 1688 and the flight of James II., and 1830 and the abdication of Charles X. Both Guizot, whose memoirs of the English Revolution had appeared in 1826, and

fusion which attends the efforts of French and German publicists to expand the concept of the Nation supports the evidence of history that the great *rôle* which it has played is transient and accidental, and that it is not the final and definite form towards which the life of a State moves. It is one thing to exalt the grandeur of this ideal for Italy or for France, but it is another to assume that it has final and equal grandeur in every land and to every State.

Nor are the endeavours of such writers as Mancini or Bluntschli to trace the principle of Nationality to the deepest impulses of man's life more auspicious. Not to Humanity, but to Imperial Rome, must be ascribed the origin of nationality as the prevailing form in the State system of modern Europe. For Roman policy was, so to speak, a Destiny, not merely to the present, but to the future world. Rome effaced the distinctions, the fretting discords of Celtic tribes, and traced the bounds of that Gallia which Meerwing and Karling, Capet and Bourbon, made it their ambition to reach,

his master Louis Philippe intended that France should draw this comparison—the latter by the title "King of the French" adroitly touching the imagination or the vanity, whilst deceiving the intelligence, of the nation.

and their glory to maintain. To the cities of the Italian allies Rome granted immunities, privileges, of municipal independence; and from the gift, as from a seed of hate, grew the interminable strife, the petty wars of the Middle Age. For this, Machiavelli, in many a bitter paragraph, has execrated the Papacy—"the stone thrust into the side of Italy to keep the wound open"—but the political creed of the great Ghibellines, Farinata, or Dante himself, shows that Italian republicanism, like French nationality, derives not from papal, but from imperial Rome.

The study of Holland, of the history of Denmark, of Prussia, of Sweden, of Scotland, does but illustrate the observation that in the principle of Nationality, whether in its origin or its ends, no ideal wide as humanity is involved, nothing that is not transient, local, or derived. Poetry and heroism have in the past clothed it with undying fame; but it is vain to invoke the word Nationality as if its principle were sacrosanct, and to impugn it were an outrage, to violate it a crime, and to destroy it an abomination. Recent history, by instance and by argument from Europe, and from other

continents, has proved that a young nation may be old in corruption, and a small State great in oppression, that right is not always on the side of weakness, nor injustice with the strong.

Not for the first time in history are these two principles, Nationality and Imperialism, or principles strikingly analogous, arrayed against each other. Modern Europe, as we have seen, is a complexus of States, of which the Nation is the constituent unit. Ancient Hellas presents a similar complexus of States, of which the unit was not the Nation but the City. There, after the Persian Wars, these communities present a conflict of principles similar to this which now confronts us, a conflict between the ideals of civic independence and civic imperialism. And the conflict is attended by similar phenomena, covert hostility, jealous execration, and finally, universal war. The issue is known.

The defeat of Athens, the downfall of Imperial Athens, after the Sicilian expedition, was a disaster to humanity. The spring of Athenian energy as an empire was broken, and the one State, the one people which Hellas

ever produced capable at once of government and of a lofty ideal, intellectual and political, was a ruin. Neither Sparta nor Macedon could take its place, and after the misery of two centuries Hellas succumbs to Rome. A disaster in South Africa would have been just such a disaster as this, but on a wider and more terrible scale—the whole earth would have felt that decline! A triumph will not less assuredly be the triumph for all time of those principles which Imperial Britain represents, that larger freedom, that higher justice, of which I have spoken, beneath whose sovereign sway the trader of every land may uncord his bales on all her shores, unhindered, the devout of every race pray to God in his own accents, unafraid.

For this empire is built upon a design more liberal even than that of Athens or the Rome of the Antonines. Britain conquers, but by the testimony of men of all races who have found refuge within her confines, she conquers less for herself than for humanity. "The earth is Man's" might be her watchword, and as if she had caught the Ocean's secret, her empire is the highway of nations. That province, that territory, that state which is added to her

sway, seems thereby redeemed for humanity rather than conquered for her own sons.

This, then, is the first characteristic of the war, a conflict between the two principles, the moribund principle of Nationality—in the Transvaal an oppressive, an artificial nationality—and the vital principle of the future.

§ 3. THE WAR OF A DEMOCRACY

But the war in South Africa has a second characteristic not less significant. It is the first great war waged by the completely constituted democracy of 1884. In the third Reform Bill, as we have seen, the efforts of six centuries of constitutional history find their realisation. The heroic action and the heroic insight, the energy, the fortitude, the suffering, from the days of Langton and de Montfort, Bigod and Morton, to those of Canning and Peel, Russell and Bright, attain in this Act their consummation and their end. The wars waged by the unreformed or partially reformed constituencies continue in their constitutional character the wars waged by the Monarchy or by the Whig or Tory oligarchies of last century. But in the

present conflict a democracy, at once imperial, self-governing and warlike, and actuated by the loftiest ideals, confronts the world.

Twice and twice only in recorded history have these qualities appeared together and simultaneously in one people, in the Athens of Pericles and the Islam of Omar.[4]

Revolutionary France was inspired by a dazzling dream, an exalted purpose, but its imperialism was the creation of the genius or the ambition of the individual; it was not rooted in the heart of the race. It was not

[4] I have employed the phrase "Islam of Omar" throughout the present work as a means of designating the period of nine-and-twenty years between the death of Mohammed, 12th Rabi I. 11 A.H., 8th June, 632 A.D., and the assassination of Ali, 17th Hamzan, 40 A.H. 27th January, 661 A.D. Even in the lifetime of Mohammed the genius and personality of Omar made themselves distinctly felt. During the caliphate of Abu Bekr the power of Omar was analogous to that of Hildebrand during the two pontificates which immediately precede his own. Omar's is the determining force, the will, and throughout his own, and the caliphates of Osman and Ali which follow, that force and that will, impart its distinction and its direction to the course of the political life of Islam. The nature and extent of the sway of this extraordinary mind mark an epoch in world-history not less memorable than the Rome of Sulla or the Athens of Pericles. From the Arab historians a portrait that is fairly convincing can be arranged, and the threat or promise with which he is said to have announced the purpose for which he undertook the caliphate is consonant with the impression of his appearance and manners which tradition has preserved—"He that is weakest among you shall be, in my sight, as the strongest until I have made good his rights unto him; but he that is strongest shall I deal with like the weakest until he submit himself to the Law."

Clive merely who gained India for England. French incapacity for the government of others, for empire, in a word, fought on our side. Napoleon knew this. What a study are those bulletins of his! After Austerlitz, after Jena, Eylau, Friedland, one iteration, assurance and reassurance, "This *is* the last, the very last campaign!" and so on till Waterloo. His Corsican intensity, the superhuman power of that mighty will, transformed the character of the French race, but not for ever. The Celtic element was too strong for him, and in the French *noblesse* he found an index to the whole nation. The sarcasm, which if he did not utter he certainly prompted, has not lost its edge—"I showed them the path to glory and they refused to tread it; I opened my drawing-room doors and they rushed in, in crowds." There is nothing more tragic in history than the spectacle of this man of unparalleled administrative and political genius, fettered by the past, and at length grown desperate, abandoning himself to his weird. The march into Russia is the return upon the daimonic spirit of its primitive instincts. The beneficent ruler is merged once more in the visionary of earlier times, dreaming

by the Nile, or asleep on the heel of a cannon on board the *Muiron.*[5] Napoleon was fighting for a dead ideal with the strength of the men who had overthrown that ideal—how should he prosper? Conquest of England, Spain, Austria, the Rhine frontier, Holland, Belgium, point by point his policy repeats Bourbon policy, the policy that led Louis XVI. to the scaffold and himself to Ste. Hélène. Yet his first battles were for liberty, and his last made the return of mediæval despotism impossible. Dying, he bequeaths imperialism to France as Euphorion leaves his vesture in the hands of Faust and Helena. How fatal was that gift of a spurious

[5] Thwarted in his schemes of world-conquest in the East by Nelson and Sir Sidney Smith, Bonaparte returned to pursue in Europe the same visionary but mighty designs. In Napoleon's career the voyage on the frigate *Muiron* marks the moment analogous to Cæsar's return from Gaul, January, 49 B.C. But Caius Julius crossed the Rubicon at the head of fifty thousand men. Bonaparte returned from Egypt alone. The best soldiers of his staff indeed accompanied him, Lannes, the "Roland" of the battles of the Empire, Murat, Bessières, Marmont, Lavalette, but to a resolute government this would but have blackened his desertion of Kléber and the army of the Pyramids. The adventure appears more desperate than Cæsar's; but speculation, anxiety, even hope, awaited Napoleon at Paris. Moreau was no Pompey. The sequence of dates is interesting. On the night of 22nd August 1799 Bonaparte went on board the frigate; five weeks later, having just missed Nelson, he reached Ajaccio; on 9th October he lands at Frejus, on the 16th he is at Paris, and resumes his residence in rue de la Victoire. Three weeks later, on 9th November, occurs the incident known to history as 18th Brumaire.

imperialism, Metz, Sedan, and Paris made clear to all men.

The Rome of the Cæsars presents successively a veiled despotism, a capricious military tyranny, or an oriental absolutism. The "Serrar del Consiglio" made Venice and her empire the paragon of oligarchic States.

Throughout the vast unbroken territorial expanses of the empire of the Czars, league stretching beyond league continuous, from the Dniester and the Baltic without a break to Saghalien and the Behring Sea, the political and the religious ideals are indeed closely bound together. No civil and ecclesiastical fury disturbs the vast inertness, and the lightnings of freedom play ineffectual above it like heaven's fiery fluid darting innocuous upon measureless tracts of morass and bog. This State indeed is united, the supreme decision seeming now to rest with the Church, now with the Government, but undivided ever. Upon the priests and their illimitable influence over the steadily increasing masses inhabiting this empire, the government rests for such support as it derives from the people in its military or imperialistic schemes. Russia thus represents

essentially the same principles as the mediæval empires, as the empire of Louis XIV., or Ferdinand II. represented,—one law, one faith, to all the earth, one law, one faith;—theocratic, superstitious, intolerant, merciless in its creed, cruel in its absolutism. If there, if there in Russia is England's enemy, it is from no rivalry in high purposes, but because they are opposed as the light and the darkness. A struggle to the death between these two States would to Humanity, whatever the issues of that dread close, but act over again the conflict between Ormuzd and Ahriman.

The rise of the empire of Spain seems in its national enthusiasm to offer a closer parallel to this of Britain. But a ruthless fanaticism, religious and political, stains from the outset the devotion of the Spanish people to their Hapsburg monarchs. Spain fought with grandeur, heroism, and with chivalrous resolution; but her dark purpose, the suppression throughout Europe of freedom of the soul, made her valour frustrate and her devotion vain. She warred against the light, and the enemies of Spain were the friends of humanity, the benefactors of races and generations un-

born. What criterion of truth, what principle even of party politics, can then incite a statesman and an historian to assert and to re-assert that in our war in South Africa we are acting as the Spanish acted against the ancestors of the Dutch, and that our fate and our retribution will be as the fate and the retribution of Spain? England's ideal is not the ideal of Spain, nor are her methods the methods of Spain. The war in Africa—is it then a war waged for the destruction of religious freedom throughout the world, or will the triumph of England establish the Inquisition in Pretoria? But, it is urged, "the Dutch have never been conquered, they are of the same stubborn, unyielding stock as our own." In the sense that they are Teutons, the Dutch are of the same stock as the English; but the characteristics of the Batavian are not those of the Jute, the Viking, and the Norseman. The best blood of the Teutonic race for six centuries went to the making of England. At the period when the Batavians were the contented dependents of Burgundy or Flanders, the English nation was being schooled by struggle and by suffering for the empire of the future. As for the former clause of the asser-

tion, it is accurate of no race, no nation. The history of the United Provinces does not close with John de Witt and William III. Can those critics of the war who still point to William the Silent, and to the broken dykes, and to Leyden, have reviewed, even in Schlosser, the history of Holland in the eighteenth century, the part of the Dutch in Frederick's wars, the turpitudes of the Peace of 1783, unequalled in modern history, and in world-history never surpassed, or the surrender of Namour to Joseph II., or of the braggadocio patriotism which that monarch tested by sending his ship down the Scheldt, or of the capitulation of Amsterdam to Brunswick?

The heroic period of the United Provinces in action, art, and literature began and ended in the deep-hearted resolution of the race to perish rather than forego the right to worship God in their own way. In the history of this State, from Philip II. to Louis XIV., religious oppression seems to play a part almost like that of individual genius in Macedon or in modern France. When that force is withdrawn, there is an end to the greatness of Holland, as when a Charlemagne, an Alexander,

or a Napoleon dies, the greatness of their empires dies also. In the passion for political greatness as such, the Dutch have never found the spur, the incitement to heroic action or to heroic self-renunciation which religion for a time supplied.

From false judgments false deeds follow, else it were but harsh ingratitude to recall, or even to remember, the decay, the humiliations of the land within whose borders Rembrandt and Spinoza, Vondel and Grotius, Cornelius and John de Witt lived, worked, and suffered.

But in the empire which fell at Syracuse we encounter resemblances to the democratic Empire of Britain, deeper and more organic, and of an impressive and even tragic significance. For though the stage on which Athens acts her part is narrower, the idea which informs the action is not less elevated and serene. A purpose yet more exultant, a hope as living, and an impulse yet more mystic and transcendent, sweeps the warriors of Islam beyond the Euphrates eastward to the Indus, then through Syria, beyond the Nile to Carthage and the Western Sea, tracing within the quarter of a century dominated by the genius

of Omar the bounds of an empire which Rome scarce attains in two hundred years. But this empire-republic, the Islam of Omar, passes swifter than a dream; the tyranny and the crimes of the palaces of Damascus and Bagdad succeed.

And now after twelve centuries a democratic Empire, raised up and exalted for ends as mystic and sublime as those of Athens and the Islam of Omar, appears upon the world-stage, and the question of questions to every student of speculative politics at the present hour is—Whither will this portent direct its energies? Will it press onward towards some yet mightier endeavour, or, mastered by some hereditary taint, sink torpid and neglectful, leaving its vast, its practically inexhaustible forces to waste unused?

The deeds on the battlefield, the spirit which fires the men from every region of that empire and from every section of that society of nations, the attitude which has marked that people and that race towards the present war, are not without deep significance. Now at last the name English People is co-extensive and of equal meaning with the English race. The

distinctions of rank, of intellectual or social environment, of birth, of political or religious creeds, professions, are all in that great act forgotten and are as if they were not. Rivals in valour, emulous in self-renunciation, contending for the place of danger, hardship, trial, they seem as if every man felt within his heart the emotion of Aeschines seeing the glory of Macedon—"Our life scarce seemed that of mortals, nor the achievements of our time." Contemplating this spectacle, this Empire thrilled throughout its vast bulk, from bound to bound of its far-stretched greatness, with one hope, one energy, one aspiration and one fear, one sorrow and one joy, is not this some warrant, is not this some presage of the future, and of the course which this people will pursue?

Let us pause here for a moment upon the transformation which this word English People has undergone. When Froissart, for instance, in the fourteenth century, speaks of the English People, he sees before him the chivalrous nobles of the type of Chandos or Talbot, the Black Prince or de Bohun. The work of the archers at Creçy and Poitiers extended the term to English yeomen, and with the rise of towns

and the spread of maritime adventure the merchant or the trader are included under the same great designation as feudal knight and baron.

Puritanism and the Civil Wars widened the term still further, but as late as the time of Chatham its general use is restricted to the ranks which it covered in the sixteenth century. Thus when Chatham or Burke speaks of the English People, it is the merchants of a town like Bristol, as opposed to the English nobles, that he has in view. And Wellington declared that Eton and Harrow bred the spirit which overcame Napoleon, which stormed Badajoz, and led the charge at Waterloo. The Duke's hostility to Reform, his reluctance to extend the term, with its responsibilities and its privileges, its burdens and its glory, to the whole race, is intelligible enough. But in this point the admirers of the Duke were wiser or more reckless than their hero, and the followers of Pitt than the followers of Chatham. The hazard of enfranchising the millions, of extending the word People to include every man of British blood, was a great, a breathless hazard. Might not a mob arise like that which gathered

round the Jacobins, or by their fury and their rage added another horror to the horror of the victim on the tumbril, making the guillotine a welcome release?

But the hazard has been made, the enfranchisement is complete, and it is a winning hazard. To Eton and Harrow, as nurseries of valour, the Duke would now require to add every national, every village school, from Bethnal Green to Ballycroy! *Populus Anglicanus*—it has risen in its might, and sent forth its sons, and not a man of them but seems on fire to rival the gallantry, the renunciation of Chandos and Talbot, of Sidney and Wolfe. Has not the present war given a harvest of instances? The soldier after Spion Kop, his jaw torn off, death threatening him, signs for paper and pencil to write, not a farewell message to wife or kin, but Wolfe's question on the Plains of Abraham—"Have we won?" Another, his side raked by a hideous wound, dying, breathes out the undying resolution of his heart, "Roll me aside, men, and go on!" Nor less heroic that sergeant, ambushed and summoned at great odds to surrender. "Never!" was the brief imperative response,

and made tranquil by that word and that defiance, shot through the heart, he falls dead. This is the spirit of the ranks, this the bearing in death, this the faith in England's ideal of the enfranchised masses.

Nor has the spirit of Eton and Harrow abated. Neither the Peninsula nor the Marlborough wars, conspicuous by their examples of daring, exhibit anything that within a brief space quite equals the self-immolating valour displayed in the disastrous openings of this war by those youths, the *gens Fabia* of modern days, prodigal of their blood, rushing into the Mauser hailstorm, as if in jest each man had sworn to make the sterile veldt blossom like the rose, fertilising it with the rich drops of his heart, since the rain is powerless!

§ 4. COSMOPOLITANISM AND JINGOISM

Nor is this heroism, and the devotion which inspires it, shut within the tented field or confined to the battle-line. The eyes of the race are upon that drama, and the heart of the race beats within the breasts of the actors. There is something Roman in the nation's unmoved purpose, the concentration of its whole

force upon one fixed mark, disregarding the judgment of men, the tumultuous outcry, the denunciations, the slander, and the spite. Such manifestations of heroism and of a zealous ardour, unexampled in its extent and its intensity, offer assuredly, I repeat, some augury, some earnest of that which is to come, some pledge to the new century rising like a planet tremulous on the horizon's verge. And this outburst of calumny and rage will attain an end little recked of by our adversaries, if like a warning shout on the verge of an ambush, the pæan of the hidden foes too soon exultant, it startle England whilst yet there is time, if it rouse England from the fatal security, the drowsy lethargy, that carelessness and unguarded trust to which armies after the victory and nations after long-continued success are equally incident. England's dearest enemies will have done the service inestimable that her friends could hardly render if it compel her to realise, however bitter the wisdom, that the Empire which the sword and the death-defiant valour of the past have upraised can be maintained only by the sword and a valour not less death-defiant, a self-renunciation not less heroic.

But a widespread error still confounds this imperial patriotism with Cosmopolitanism, this resolution of a great people with Jingoism. Now what is Cosmopolitanism? It is an attitude of mind purely negative; it is a characteristic of protected nationalities, and of decayed races. It passes easily into political indifference, political apathy. It is the negation of patriotism; but it offers no constructive ideal in its stead. Imperialism is active, is constructive. It is the passion of Marathon and Trafalgar, it is the patriotism of a de Montfort or a Grenville, at once intensified and heightened by the aspirations of humanity, by the ideals of a Shelley, a Wilberforce, or a Canning. But between mere war-fever, Jingoism, and such free, unfettered enthusiasm, a nation's unaltering loyalty in defeat or in triumph to an ideal born of its past, and its joy in the actions in which this ideal is realised, the gulf is wide. Napoleon knew this. Nothing in history is more illuminating than the bitter remark with which he turned away from the sight of the enthusiasm with which Vienna welcomed its defeated sovereign, Francis II. All his victories could not purchase him *that!*

Would the critics of "music-hall madness" prefer to see a city stand sullen, silent, indifferent, cursing in the bitterness of its heart the government, the army, the empire? Or would they have it like the Roman mob of the first Cæsars, cluster in crowds, careless of empire, battles, or the glory of Rome's name, shouting for a loaf of bread and a circus ticket? Between the cries, the laughter, the tears of a mob and the speech or the silence of a statesman there is a great space; but it were rash to assume that the dissonant clamour of the crowds is but an ignorant or a transient frenzy. What! In religion itself have we not similar variety of expression? Those faces gathered under the trees or in a public thoroughfare—the expression of emotion there is not that which we witness, say in Santa Croce, at prime, when the first light falls through the windows on Giotto's frescoes, Herod and Francis, St. Louis and the Soldan, and on the few, the still worshippers,—but dare we assert that this alone is sincere, the other unfelt because loud?

§ 5. MILITARISM

And yet beneath this joy, the tumultuous joy of this hour of respite from a hope that in the end became harder to endure than despair, there is perhaps not a single heart in this Empire which does not at moments start as at some menacing, some sinister sound, a foreboding of evil which it endeavours to shake off but cannot, for it returns, louder and more insistent, tyrannously demanding the attention of the most reluctant. Once more on this old earth of ours is witnessed the spectacle of a vast people stirred by one ideal impulse, prepared for all sacrifices for that ideal, prepared to face war, and the outcry of a misunderstanding or envious antagonism. Whither is this impulse to be directed? What minister or parliament is to dare the responsibility of turning this movement, this great and spontaneous movement, to this people's salvation, to this Empire's high purposes? How shall its bounds be made secure against encroachment, its own shores from coalesced foes?

But a few months ago, and the Scythian's taunt to the pretentious but decrepit empire of

Constantine seemed borne to us down the centuries—"I marvel that you still speak of empire, you who can no longer make war upon a village!" Is this spectre laid for ever? For how shall any government, any parliament, local or imperial, pursue its designs, carry out the empire's purposes, if all its foreign or colonial measures, decisions, resolutions are swayed or controlled by the possibility or certainty of the disapproval of St. Petersburg or Vienna, by the apprehension of an armed protest from Paris or Berlin?

Let me approach this matter from the standpoint of history, the sole standpoint from which I have the right—to use a current phrase—to speak as an expert. First of all let me say, that an axiom or maxim which appears to guide the utterances if not the actions of statesmen, the maxim that the British people will under no circumstances tolerate any form of compulsory service for war, is unjustified by history. It has no foundation in history at all! Nothing in the past justifies the ascription of such a limit to the devotion of this people. Of an ancient lineage, but young in empire, proud, loving freedom, not disdainful of glory, per-

fectly fearless—who shall assign bounds to its devotion or determine the limits of its endurance? I go further, I affirm that the records of the past, the heroic sacrifices which England made in the sixteenth, in the seventeenth century, and in later times, justify the contrary assumption, justify the assumption that at this crisis—this grave and momentous crisis, a crisis such as I think no council of men has had to face for many centuries, perhaps not since the embassy of the Goths to the Emperor Valens—the ministry or cabinet which but dares, dares to trust this people's resolution, will find that this enthusiasm is not that of men overwrought with war-fever, but the deep-seated purpose of a people strong to defend the heritage of its fathers, and not to swerve from the path which fate itself has marked out for it amongst the empires of the earth. This, I maintain, is the verdict of history upon the matter.

There is a second prominent argument against compulsory service, an argument drawn by analogy from the circumstances of other nations. Men point to Rennes, to the petty tyrannies of military upstarts over civilians in Germany, and cry, "Behold what awaits you

from conscription!" Such arguments have precisely the same value as the arguments against Parliamentary Reform fifty years ago, based on the terror of Jacobinism. We might as well condemn all free institutions because of Tammany Hall, as condemn compulsory service because of its abuses, in other countries. And an appeal to the Pretorians of Rome or to the Janizzaries of the Ottoman empire would be as relevant as an appeal for warning to the major-generals of Oliver Cromwell. Nor is there any fixed and necessary hostility between militarism and art, between militarism and culture, as the Athens of Plato and of Sophocles, a military State, attests.

All institutions are transfigured by the ideal which calls them into being. And this ideal of Imperial Britain—to bring to the peoples of the earth beneath her sway the larger freedom and the higher justice—the world has known none fairer, none more exalted, since that for which Godfrey and Richard fought, for which Barbarossa and St. Louis died. There is nothing in our annals which warrants evil presage from the spread of militarism, nothing which precludes the hope, the just confidence

that our very blood and the ineffaceable character of our race will save us from any mischief that militarism may have brought to others, and that in the future another chivalry may arise which shall be to other armies and other systems what the Imperial Parliament is to the parliaments of the world—a paragon and an example.

With us the decision rests. If we should decide wrongly—it is not the loss of prestige, it is not the narrowed bounds we have to fear, it is the judgment of the dead, the despair of the living, of the inarticulate myriads who have trusted to us, it is the arraigning eyes of the unborn. Who can confront this unappalled?

LECTURE V

WHAT IS WAR?

[Tuesday, 12th June 1900.]

ASSUMING then that the imperialistic is the supreme form in the political development of the national as of the civic State, and that to the empires of the world belongs the government of the world in the future, and that in Britain a mode of imperialism which may be described as democratic displays itself,—a mode which in human history is rarely encountered, and never save at crises and fraught with consequences memorable to all time—the problem meets us, will this form of government make for peace or for war, considering peace and war not as mutual contradictories but as alternatives in the life of a State? Even a partial solution of this problem requires a consideration of the question "What is War?"

§ 1. THE PLACE OF WAR IN WORLD-HISTORY

The question "What is War?" has been variously answered, according as the aim of the writer is to illustrate its methods historically, or from the operations of the wars of the past to deduce precepts for the tactics or the strategy of the present, or as in the writings of Aristotle and Grotius, of Montesquieu and Bluntschli, to assign the limits of its fury, or fix the basis of its ethics, its distinction as just or unjust. But another aspect of the question concerns us here —What is War in itself and by itself? And what is its place in the life-history of a State considered as an entity, an organic unity, distinct from the unities which compose it? Is war a fixed or a transient condition of the political life of man, and if permanent, does its relation to the world-force admit of description and definition?

If we were to adopt the method by which Aristotle endeavoured to arrive at a correct conception of the nature of a State, and review the part which war has played in world-history, and, disregarding the mechanical enumeration of causes and effects, if we were

to examine the motives, impulses, or ideals embodied in the great conflicts of world-history, the question whether war be a necessary evil, an infliction to which humanity must resign itself, would be seen to emerge in another shape—whether war be an evil at all; whether in the life-history of a State it be not an attestation of the self-devotion of that State to the supreme end of its being, even of its power of consecration to the Highest Good?

Every great war known to history resolves itself ultimately into the conflict of two ideals. The Cavalier fights in triumph or defeat in a cause not less exalted than that of the Puritan, and Salamis acquires a profounder significance when considered, not from the standpoint of Athens and Themistocles merely, but from the camp of Xerxes, and the ruins of the mighty designs of Cyrus and Hystaspes, an incident which Aeschylus found tragic enough to form a theme for one of his loftiest trilogies.[1] The wars against Pisa and Venice

[1] The sea and the invincible might of Athens on the waves formed the connecting ideas of the three dramas, *Phineus*, *Persæ*, *Glaucus*. The trilogy was produced in 473 or 472 B.C., whilst the memory of Salamis was still fresh in every heart. The *Phœnissæ*, the "Women of Sidon,"

light with intermittent gleams the else sordid annals of Genoa; and through the grandeur and ferocity of a century of war, Rome moves to world-empire, and Carthage to a death which throws a lustre over her history, making its least details memorable, investing its merchants with an interest beyond that of princes, and bequeathing to mankind the names of Hamilcar and Hannibal as a strong argument of man's greatness if all other records were to perish. *Qui habet terram habet bellum* is but a half-truth. No war was ever waged for material ends only. Territory is a trophy of battle, but the origin of war is rooted in the character, the political genius, the imagination of the race. One of the profoundest of modern investigators in mediæval history, Dr. Georg Waitz, insists on the attachment of the Teutonic kindred to the soil, and on the measures by which in the primitive constitutions the war-instinct was checked.[2] The observation

a tragedy on the same theme by Phrynichus, had been acted five years earlier. The distinction of these works lay in the presentation to the conquering State of a great victory as a tragedy in the life of the vanquished.

[2] Thus in speaking of the ancient life of the Teutonic peoples: "Doch alles das (Neigung zum Kampf mit den Nachbarn und zu kriegerischen Zügen in die Ferne) hat nicht gehindert, dass, wo die

of Waitz is just, but a change in environment develops the latent qualities of a race. The restless and melancholy surge, the wide and desolate expanse of the North Sea exalted the imagination of the Viking as the desert the imagination of the Arab. Not the cry of "New lands" merely, but the adventurous heart of his race, lured on by the magic of the sea, its receding horizons, its danger and its change, spread the fame and the terror of the Norsemen from the basilicas, the marbles, and the thronging palaces of Byzantium to the solitary homestead set in the English forest-clearing, or in the wastes of Ireland which the zeal of her monasteries was slowly reclaiming. To the glamour of war for its own sake the Crusades brought the transforming power of a new ideal. The cry "*Deus vult!*" at Clermont marks for the whole Teutonic race the final transition from the type of Alaric and

Deutschen sich niederliessen, alsbald bestimmte Ordnungen des öffentlichen und rechtlichen Lebens begründet wurden."—*Verfassungsgeschichte*, 3rd ed. i. p. 19; cf. also i. pp. 416-17: "Es hat nicht eigene Kriegsvölker gegeben, gebildet durch und für den Krieg, nicht Kriegsstaaten in solchem Sinn, dass alles ganz und allein für den Krieg berechnet gewesen wäre, nicht einmal auf die Dauer Kriegsfürsten, deren Herrschaft nur in Kriegführung und Heeresmacht ihren Grund gehabt."

Chlodovech, of Cerdic and Hrolf, to that of Godfrey and Tancred, Richard Lion-heart and Saint Louis, from the sagas and the war-songs of the northern skalds to the chivalrous verse of the troubadours, a Bertrand or a Rudel, to the epic narrative of the crusades which transfigures at moments the prose of William of Tyre or of Orderic, of Geoffrey de Vinsauf or of Joinville.

The wide acceptance of the territorial theory of the origin of war as an explanation of war, and the enumeration by historians of causes and results in territory or taxation, can be ascribed only to that indolence of the human mind, the subtle inertia which, as Tacitus affirms, lies in wait to mar all high endeavour—"Subit quippe etiam ipsius inertiæ dulcedo, et invisa primo desidia postremo amatur."

The wars of the Hebrews, if territorial in their apparent origin, reveal in their course their true origin in the heart of the race, the consciousness of the high destiny reserved for it amongst the Semitic kindred, amongst the nations of the earth. If ever there were a race which seemed destined to found a world-empire by the sword it is the Hebrew. They make

war with Roman relentlessness and with more than Roman ideality, the Lord God of Hosts guiding their march or their retreat by day and by night ceaselessly. Every battle is a Lake Regillus, and for the great Twin Brethren it is Jehovah Sabaoth that nerves the right arm of his faithful. The forms of Gideon and Joshua, though on a narrower stage, have a place with those other captains of their race—Hannibal, Bar-Cochab, Khalid, Amr, Saad,[3] and Mothanna. The very spirit of war seems to shape their poetry from the first chant for

[3] The lapse of ages, enthusiasm, or carelessness, tribal jealousies or the accidental predilections of an individual poet or historian, combine to render the early history of the Arabs, so far as precision in dates, the definite order and mutual relations of events, characters, and localities are concerned, perplexing and insecure, or tantalising by the wealth of detail, impressive indeed, but eluding the test of historical criticism. Their tactics and the composition of their armies make the precise share of this or that general in determining the result of a battle or a campaign difficult to estimate. Yet by the concord of authorities the glory of the overthrow of the Empire of the Sassanides seems to be the portion, first of Mothanna, who sustained the fortunes of Islam at a most critical hour, 13-14 A.H., and by his victory at Boawib just warded off a great disaster; and secondly of Saad, the victor of Kadesia, A.H. 15, 636-37 A.D., the conqueror and first administrator of Irak. The claims of Amr, or Amrou, to the conquest of Egypt, Pelusium, Memphis, Alexandria, 638 A.D., admit of hardly a doubt; whilst the distinction of Khalid, "the Sword of God," in the Syrian War at the storming of Damascus and in the crushing defeat of Heraclius at the Yermuk, Aug. 634 A.D., may justly entitle him to the designation—if that description can be applied to any one of the devoted band—of "Conqueror of Syria."

the defeat of Egypt to that last song of constancy in overthrow, of unconquerable resolve and sure vengeance; a march music befitting Judas Maccabæus and his men, beside which all other war-songs, even the "Marseillaise," appear of no account—the *Al Naharoth Babel* —"Let my sword-hand forget, if I forget thee, O Jerusalem,"—passing from the mood of pity through words that are like the flash of spears to a rapture of revenge known only to the injured spirits of the great when baulked of their God-appointed fate. Yet on the shores of the Western Sea the career of this race abruptly ends, as if in Palestine they found a Capua, as the Crusaders long afterwards, Templars and Hospitallers, found in that languid air, the Syrian clime, a Capua. Thus the Hebrews missed the world-empire which the Arabs gained, but even out of their despair created another empire, the empire of thought; and the power to found this empire, whether expressed in the character of their warriors, or in that unparalleled conviction which marks the Hebrew in the remotest lands and most distant centuries, the certainty of his return, the refusal, unyielding, to believe that he has

missed the great meed which, there in Palestine, there in the Capua of his race, seemed within his grasp, but attests further that it is in no lust for territory that these wars originate.

In the historical and speculative literature of Hellas and Rome war occupies a position essentially identical with that which it occupies in the Hebrew. It is the assertion of right by violence, or it is the pursuit of a fate-appointed end. Aristotle, with his inveterate habit of subjecting all things—art, statesmanship, poetry—to ethics, regards war as a valuable discipline to the State, a protection against the enervating influence of peace. As the life of the individual is divided between business and leisure, so, according to Aristotle, the life of the State is divided between war and peace. But to greatness in peace, greatness in war is a primal condition. The State which cannot quit itself greatly in war will achieve nothing great in peace. "The slave," he bitterly remarks, "knows no leisure, and the State which sets peace above war is in the condition of a slave." Aristotle does not mean that the slave is perpetually at work, or that war is the sole duty

of a great State, but as the soul destined to slavery is incapable even in leisure of the contemplations of the soul destined to freedom, so to the nation which shrinks from war the greatness that belongs to peace can never come. Courage, Plato defines as "the knowledge of the things that a man should fear and that he should not fear," and in a state, a city, or an empire courage consists in the unfaltering pursuit of its being's end against all odds, when once that end is manifest. This ideal element, this formative principle, underlies the Hellenic conception of war throughout its history, from its first glorification in Achilles to the last combats of the Achæan League — from the divine beauty of the youthful Achilles, dazzling as the lightning and like the lightning pitiless, yet redeemed to pathos by the certainty of the quick doom that awaits him, on to the last bright forms which fall at Leuctra, Mantinea, and Ipsus. It requires a steadfast gaze not to turn aside revolted from the destroying fury of Greeks against Greeks — Athens, Thebes, Sparta, Corinth, and Macedon—and yet even their claim to live, their greatness, did in this consist, that for so light yet so immortal a cause

they were content to resign the sweet air and the sight of the sun, and of this wondrous fabric of a world in which their presence, theirs, the children of Hellas, was the divinest wonder of all!

Of the grandeur and elevation which Rome imparted to war and to man's nature it is superfluous to speak. As in statesmanship, so in war, he who would greatly praise another describes his excellence as Roman, and thinks that all is said. The silver eagle which Caius Marius gave as an ensign to the legions is for once in history the fit emblem of the race that bore it to victory and world-dominion. History by fate or chance added a touch of the supernatural to the action of Marius. The silver eagle announced the empire of the Cæsars; the substitution of the *Labarum* by Constantine heralded its decline. With the emblem of humiliation and peace, the might of Rome sinks, yet throughout the centuries that follow, returns of galvanic life, recollections of its ancient valour—as in Stilicho, Belisarius, Heraclius, and Zimisces[4]—bear far into the

[4] "The twelve years of their military command (*i.e.* of Nicephorus and Zimisces) form the most splendid period of the Byzantine annals. The sieges of Mopsuestia and Tarsus in Silicia first exercised the skill

Middle Age the dread name of the Roman legion, though the circuit of the eagle's flight, once wide as the ambient air, is then narrowed to a league or two on either side of the Bosphorus.

§ 2. DEFINITION OF WAR

To push the survey further would but add to the instances, without deepening the impression, of the measureless power of the ideal element in war, alike in the history of the great races of the past and of the present. Even the wars which seem most arbitrary and, to the judgment of their contemporaries, purposeless, acquire, upon a deeper scrutiny and in after ages, a profound enough significance. Behind the immediate occasion, trivial or capricious, sordid or grandiose, the destiny of the race, like the Nemesis of Greek Tragedy, advancing

and perseverance of their troops, on whom at this moment I shall not hesitate to bestow the name of Romans."—Gibbon, chap. lii. The reign of Zimisces, 969-76 A.D., forms the subject of the opening chapters, pp. 1-326, of Schlumberger's massive work, *L'Épopée Byzantine à la fin du dixième siècle*, Paris, 1896, which exhausts every resource of modern research into this period. Zimisces' rise to power, and the career of the other heroic figure of the tenth century in Byzantine history are dealt with not less exhaustively in Schlumberger's earlier volume, *Un Empereur byzantin*, Paris, 1890.

relentlessly, pursuing its own far-off and lofty ends, constantly reveals itself.

War, therefore, I would define as a phase in the life-effort of the State towards completer self-realisation, a phase of the eternal *nisus*, the perpetual omnipresent strife of all being towards self-fulfilment. Destruction is not its aim, but the intensification of the life, whether of the conquering or of the conquered State. War is thus a manifestation of the world-spirit in the form the most sublime and awful that can enthrall the contemplation of man. It is an action radiating from the same source as the heroisms, the essential agonies, ἀγωνίαι, conflicts, of all life. "In this theatre of a world," as Calderon avers, "all are actors, *todos son representantes.*" There too the State enacts its tragedy. Nation, city, or empire, it too is a *representante.* Though the stage is of more imposing dimensions, the Force of which each wears the mask is one with the Force which sets the stars their path and guides the soul of man to its appointed goal. A war then is in the development of the consciousness of the State analogous to those moments in the individual career when, in

Hamlet's phrase, his fate "crying out," death is preferable to a disregard of the Summoner. The state, the nation, or the empire hazards death, is content to resign existence itself, if so be it fulfil but its destiny, and swerve not from its being's law. Not to be envied is that man who, in the solemn prayer of two embattled hosts, can discern but an organised hypocrisy, a mockery, an insult to God! God is the God of all the earth, but dark are the ways, obscure and tangled the forest-paths, in which He makes His children walk. A mockery? That cry for guidance in the dread ordeal, that prayer by the hosts, which is but the formulated utterance of the still, the unwhispered prayer in the heart of each man on the tented field—"Through death to life, even through death to life, as my country fares on its great path through the thickening shadows to the greater light, to the higher freedom!"—is this a mockery? Yet such is the prayer of armies. War so considered ceases to be an action continually to be deplored, regretted, or forgiven, ceases to be the offspring of human weakness or human crime, and the sentence of the Greek orator recovers its living and consoling power—"Of

the dead who have fallen in battle the wide earth itself is the sepulchre; their tomb is not the grave in which they are laid, but the undying memory of the generations that come after them. They perish, snatched in a moment, in the height of achievement, not from their fear, but from their renown. Fortunate! And you who have lost them, you, who as mortal have been born subject unto disaster, how fortunate are you to whom sorrow comes in so glorious a shape!"

Thus the great part which war has played in human history, in art, in poetry, is not, as Rousseau maintains, an arraignment of the human heart, not necessarily the blazon of human depravity, but a testimony to man's limitless capacity for devotion to other ends than existence for existence' sake,—his pursuit of an ideal, perpetually.

§ 3. COUNT TOLSTOI AND CARLYLE UPON WAR

Those critics of the relations of State to State, of nation to nation, to whom I have more than once referred, have recently found in their condemnation of diplomacy and war a

remarkable and powerful ally. Amongst the rulers of thought, the sceptred sovereigns of the modern mind, Count Tolstoi occupies a unique position, not without resemblance to that of Goethe in the beginning of the century, or to that of Voltaire in the great days of Louis XV. In the neutral region where the spheres of religion and ethics meet and blend, his words, almost as soon as spoken, rivet the attention, quicken the energies, or provoke the hostility of one-half the world—when he speaks, he speaks not to Russia merely, but to Europe, to America, and to the wide but undefined limits of Greater Britain. Of no other living writer can this be said. Carlyle had no such extended sway in his lifetime, nor had Hugo so instantly an universal hearing. How then does Count Tolstoi regard War? For on this high matter the judgment of such a man cannot but claim earnest scrutiny. Examining his writings, even from *The Cossacks*, through such a masterpiece as *War and Peace*, colossal at once in design and in execution, on to his latest philosophical pamphlets or paragraphs, one phase at least of his thought reveals itself—gradually increasing vehemence in the expression of his

abhorrence of all war as the instrument of oppression, the enemy of man's advance to the ideal state, forbidden by God, forbidden above all by Christ, and by its continued existence turning our professed faith in Christ into a derision. This general impression is deepened by his treatment of individual incidents and characters. Has Count Tolstoi a campaign to narrate, or a battle, say the Borodino, to describe? That which rivets his attention, absorbs his energies, is the fatuity of all the generals indiscriminately, even of Kutusov; it is the supremacy of Hazard;—and in the hour of battle itself he sees no heroisms, no devotions, or he turns aside from such spectacles to fasten his gaze upon the shuddering heart, the blanched countenance, the agonising effort of the combatants to conquer their own terror, their own dismay; and to close the scene he throws wide the hospital, and points to the wounds, the mutilated bodies, the amputated limbs yet quivering, to the fever, and the revel of death. Has he the enigma of modern times to solve, Napoleon I.? In Napoleon, who in the sphere of action is to Modern History what Shakespeare is in the sphere of art, Tolstoi

sees, well, no more than the clerical harlequin, Abbé de Pradt, sees, a stage conqueror, a charlatan devoured by vanity, without greatness, dignity, without genius for war yet impatient of peace, shallow of intellect, tricking, and tricked by all around him, dooming myriads to death for the amusement of an hour, yet on the dread morning of Borodino anxious only about the quality of the eau de Cologne with which he lavishly sprinkles his handkerchief, vest, and coat. And the campaigns of Napoleon, republican, consular, imperial? Lodi, Arcola, Marengo, Austerlitz, Eylau, Friedland, Wagram, Borodino, Leipsig, Champaubert, and Montmirail? These all are the deeds of Chance, of happy Chance, the guide that is no guide, of the eyeless, brutal, dark, unthinking force resident in masses of men. This is Tolstoi's conception of the man who is to the Aryan race what Hannibal is to the Semitic—its crowning glory in war.

Consider in contrast with this the attitude towards war of a thinker, a visionary, not less great than Tolstoi—Carlyle. Like Tolstoi, Carlyle is above all things a prophet, that is to say, he feels as the Hebrew prophet felt, deeply

and with resentful passionateness, the contrast between what his race, nation, or people is, and what, by God's decrees, it is meant to be! Yet what is Carlyle's judgment upon war? His work is the witness. After the brief period of Goethe-worship, from 1834 on through forty years of monastic seclusion and labour not monastic, but as of a literary Hercules, the shaping thought of his work, tyrannous and all-pervading, is that of the might, the majesty, and the mystery of war. One flame-picture after another sets this principle forth. What a contrast are his battle-paintings to those of Tolstoi! Consider the long array of them from the first engagements of the French Revolutionary chiefs at Valmy and Jemappes. These represent Carlyle in the flush of manhood. His fiftieth year ushers in the battle-pictures of the Civil War—Marston Moor, Naseby, and Dunbar, when Cromwell defeats the men of Carlyle's own nation. The greatest epoch of Carlyle's life, the epoch of the writing of *Frederick*, is also that of the mightiest series of his battle-paintings. And finally, when his course is nearly run, he rouses himself to write the last of all his battles, yet at

once in characterisation and vividness of heroic vision one of his finest, the death of the great Berserker, Olaf Tryggvason, the old Norse king. In the last sea-fight of Olaf there flames up within Carlyle's spirit, now in extreme age,[5] the same glory and delight in war as in the days of his early manhood when he wrote Valmy and Jemappes. Since the heroic age there are no such battle-pictures as these. The spirit of war that leaps and laughs within these pages is the spirit of Homer and Firdusi, of *Beowulf* and the *Song of Roland*, and when it sank, it was like the going down of a sun. The breath that blows through the *Iliad* stirs the pages of *Cromwell* and of *Frederick;* Mollwitz, Rossbach, Leuthen, Zorndorf, Liegnitz, and Torgau, these are to the delineation, the exposition of modern warfare, the warfare of strategy and of tactics, what the combats drawn by Homer are to the warfare of earlier times.

Now in a mind not less profoundly religious than that of Tolstoi, not less fixedly conscious

[5] Carlyle was in his seventy-seventh year when he completed the *Early Kings of Norway.* "Finished yesterday that long rigmarole upon the Norse kings" is the comment in his Journal under date 15th February 1872.—Froude, *Carlyle's Life in London*, vol. ii. p. 411.

of the Eternal behind the transient, of the Presence unseen that shapes all this visible universe, whence comes this exaltation of war, this life-long pre-occupation with the circumstance of war? To Carlyle, nineteen centuries after Christ, as to Thucydides, four centuries before Christ, war is the supreme expression of the energy of a State as such, the supreme, the tragic hour, in the life-history of the city, the nation, as such. To Carlyle war is therefore neither anti-religious nor inhuman, but the evidence in the life of a State of a self-consecration to an ideal end; it is that manifestation of the world-spirit of which I have spoken above,—a race, a nation, an empire, conscious of its destiny, hazarding all upon the fortunes of the stricken field! Carlyle, as his writings, as his recorded actions approve, was not less sensitive than Tolstoi to the pity of human life, to the "tears of things" as Virgil would say; but are there not in every city, in every town, hospitals, wounds, mangled limbs, fevers, that make of every day of this sad earth of ours a day after Borodino? The life that pants out its spirit, exultant on the battlefield, knows but its own suffering; it is the eye of the

onlooker which discovers the united agony. It was a profounder vision, a wider outlook, not a harder heart, which made Carlyle[6] apparently blind to that side of war which alone rivets the attention of Tolstoi—the pathological. And yet Tolstoi and his house have for generations been loyal to the Czars; he has proved that loyalty on the battlefield as his fathers before him have done. Tolstoi has no system to crown, like Auguste Comte or Mr. Herbert Spencer, with the coping-stone of universal peace and a world all sunk in bovine content. Whither then shall we turn for an explanation of his arraignment of war?

§ 4. COUNT TOLSTOI AS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SLAVONIC GENIUS

Considering Tolstoi as a world-ruler, as Goethe was, as Voltaire was, a characteristic differentiating him from such men at once betrays itself. The nimble spirit of Voltaire

[6] Mr. Herbert Spencer's characterisation of Carlyle as a devil-worshipper (*Data of Ethics*, § 14) must be regarded less as an effort in serious criticism than as the retort, perhaps the just retort, of the injured evolutionist and utilitarian to the Pig Philosophy of the eighth of the *Latter-Day Pamphlets*.

in its airy imaginings seems a native, or at least a charming visitant, of every clime, of every epoch ; Goethe, impelled more by his innate disposition than by any plan of culture, draws strength and inspiration from a circuit even wider than Voltaire's—Greece, Rome, Persia, Italy, the Middle Age, Mediæval Germany ; Carlyle's work made him, at least in spirit, a native of France for three or four years, and for twelve a German ; even Dr. Henrik Ibsen in his hot youth essayed a *Catiline*, and in later life seeks the subject of what is perhaps his masterpiece, the *Emperor and Galilean*, in the Rome of the fourth century. But in Russia Tolstoi begins, and in Russia he ends. As volume after volume proceeds from his prolific pen—essays, treatises theological or social, tales, novels, diaries, or confessions—all alike are Russian in scenery, Russian in character, Russian in temperament, Russian in their aspirations, their hopes, or their despairs. Nowhere is there a trace of Hellas, Rome does not exist for him, the Middle Age which allured Hugo has for Tolstoi no glamour. In this he but resembles the Russian writers from Krilov to the present day. It is equally true

of Gogol, of Poushkine, of Tourgenieff, of Herzen, of Lermontoff, of Dostoievsky. If Tourgenieff has placed the scene of one of his four longer works at Baden, yet it is in the Russian coterie that the tragedy of Irène Pavlovna unfolds itself. Thus confined in his range, and in his inspiration, to his own race, the work of a Russian artist, or thinker, springs straight from the heart of the race itself. When therefore Tolstoi speaks on war, he voices not his own judgment merely but the judgment of the race. In his conception of war the force of the Slavonic race behind him masters his own individual genius. Capacity in a race for war is distinct from valour. Amongst the Aryan peoples, the Slav, the Hindoo, the Celt display valour, contempt for death unsurpassed, but unlike the Roman or the Teuton they have never by war sought the achievement of a great political design, or subordinated the other claims of existence, whether of the nation or the individual, for the realisation of a great political ideal. Thus the history of the two western divisions of the Slavonic race, Poland and Bohemia, reads like the history of Ireland. It is studded with

combats, but there is no war. The downfall of Bohemia, the surrender of Prague, the Weissenberg, are but an illustration of this thesis. And three centuries earlier Ottokar and his flaunting chivalry go down before the charge of Rudolf of Hapsburg, like Vercingetorix before Caius Julius. Ziska's cry of havoc to all the earth is not redeemed by fanaticism and has no intelligible end. And the noblest figure in Czech history, George of Podiebrad, whose portrait Palacky[7] has etched with laborious care and unerring insight, is essentially a statesman, not a warrior.

Similarly the history of the Russian Slav has marked organic resemblances with that of the Poles and the Czechs. His sombre courage, his enduring fortitude, are a commonplace. Eylau and Friedland attested this, and many a later field, and the chronicle of

[7] The Revolution of 1848 made the appearance of Palacky's work in the native language of Bohemia possible. Two volumes had already been issued in German. If ever the work of a scholar and an historian had the effect of a national song, this virtue may be ascribed to the Czech version of Palacky's *Geschichte Bœhmens*. After two centuries of subjection to the Hapsburgs and apparent oblivion of her past, Bohemia awoke and discovered that she had a history. Of the seven volumes of the German edition, the period dominated by the personality of George of Podiebrad forms the subject of the fourth, Prague, 1857-60.

his recent wars, from Potiamkin to Skobeleff, from Kutusov to Todleben, illustrate the justice of Napoleon's verdict, "unparalleled heroism in defence." And yet out of the sword the Slav has never forged an instrument for the perfection of a great political ideal. War has served the oppression, the ambition of his governments, not the aspirations of his race. Conceived as the effort within the life of the State towards a higher self-realisation, the Slav knows not war. He has used war for defence in a manner memorable for ever to men, or for cold and pitiless aggression, but in the service of a constructive ideal, stretched across generations or across centuries, he has never used it. Even the conquest of Siberia, from the first advance of the Novgorod merchants in the eleventh century, through the wars of Ivan IV. and his successors, attests this. The Don Cossacks destroy the last remnant of the mighty Mongol dynasty, a fragment flung off from the convulsion of the thirteenth century, ruled by a descendant of Ginghis. The government of the Czars astutely annexes the fruits of Cossack valour, but in the administration of

its first remarkable conquest the irremediable defect of the Slavonic race declares itself. The innate energy, the determining genius for constructive politics which marks races destined for empire, everywhere is wanting. Indeed the very despotism of the Czars, alien in blood, foreign in character, derives its present security, as once its origin, from the immovable langour, the unconquerable tendency of the Slav towards political indifferentism. Nihilism, the tortured revolt against a secular wrong, is but a morbid expression of emotions and aspirations that have marked the Slav throughout history. Catherine the Great felt this. Its spirit baulked her enterprise in the very hour when Voltaire urged that now if ever was the opportunity to recover Constantinople from "the fanaticism of the Moslem." The impressive designs of Nicholas I. left the heart of the race untouched, and in recent times the cynicism which has occasionally startled or revolted Europe is but a pseudo-Machiavellianism. It does not originate, like the policy which a Polybius or a Machiavelli, a Richelieu or a Mirabeau have described or practised, in the pursuit of a majestic design

before whose ends all must yield, but from the absence of such design, betraying the *camerilla* which has neither race nor nation, people nor city, behind it. Russia's mightiest adversary, Napoleon, knew the character of the race more intimately than its idol, Napoleon's adroit flatterer and false friend, the Czar Alexander, knew it; yet the enthusiast of *Valérie*, supple and calculating even in his mysticism, is still the noblest representative of the oppressive policy of two hundred years.

Triumph has not exalted Russia's conception of her task; save in strength she is changed in nothing. If England's true enemy is in Russia, if it is on the steppes that we must search for the enemy of Greater Britain, if it is thither that we must look for the deadly close which shall leave the conflict with Spain in the sixteenth, and with France in the eighteenth century far behind, it is because her ideal and the ideal of Britain are opposed as freedom and oppression, persecution and tolerance, justice and wrong. The contrast between Imperial Britain and Russia briefly lies in this—that in the former a self-governing, warlike democracy, dowered with the

genius for empire, moved by a lofty political ideal, and resolute to fulfil its destiny, confronts the new age; in the latter a strongly organised and self-centred autocracy, an ancient government attracted by imperialistic schemes, endeavours to force into a policy of aggression an army tainted with Nihilism, and a people passively loyal or sullenly rebellious. The theory that the Slav must "have his day" in Europe rests upon a false or superficial analogy. Genius for empire in a race, as I have said elsewhere, like genius for art in an individual, is innate, but not in all. And Russia has revealed in nothing a trace of modern imperialism, of sympathy with modern political ideals, nor any capacity for developing that imperialism or that sympathy.

Such is the light which the temperament of his race and its history throw upon Count Tolstoi's arraignment of war. The government perceives in the solitary thinker its adversary, but an adversary who, unlike a Bakounine, a Nekrasoff, or a Herzen, gives form and utterance not to the theories, the social or political doctrines of an individual or a party, but to the universal instincts of the

whole Slavonic people. Therefore he will not die in exile. The bigotry of a priest may deny his remains a hallowed resting-place, but the government, instructed by the craft of Nicholas I. and the fate of Alexander III., will allow the creator of Anna Karenina, of Natascha, and of Ivan Illyitch, to breathe to the last the air of the steppes.

§ 5. THE TEACHINGS OF CHRIST AND WAR

There remains an aspect of this question, frequently dealt with in the writings of Tolstoi, but by no means confined to these writings, to which I must allude briefly. There are many men within these islands, if I mistake not, who regard with pride and emotion the acts of England in this great crisis, but nevertheless are oppressed with a vague consciousness that war, for whatever cause waged, is, as Tolstoi declares, directly hostile to the commands, to the authority of Christ. This is a subject which I approach with reluctance, with reverence, more for the sake of those amongst you upon whom such conviction may have weighed, than from any value I attach to the suggestions I have now to offer.

First of all, as we have seen from this brief survey of the wars of the past, the most religious of the great races of the world, and the most religious amongst the divisions of those races,—the Hebrews, the Romans, the Teutons, the Saracens, the Osmanli,—have been the most warlike and have pursued in war the loftiest political ends. This fact is significant, because war, like religion and like language, represents not the individual but the race, the city, or the nation. In a work of art, the *Phædrus* of Plato or the *Bacchus and Ariadne* of Titian, the genius of the individual is in appearance at least, sovereign and despotic. But as a language represents the happy moments of inspiration of myriads of unremembered poets, who divined the fit sound, the perfect word, harmonious or harsh, to embody for ever, and to all succeeding generations of the race, its recurring moods of desire or delight, of pain, or sorrow, or fear; and as in a religion, the heart aspirations towards the Divine of a long series of generations converge, by genius or fortune, into a flame-like intensity in a Zerdusht, a Mohammed, or a Gautama Buddha; so war represents the action, the deed, not of

the individual but of the race. Religion incarnates the thought, language the imagination, war the resolution, the *will*, of a race. Reflecting then on the part which war has played in the history of the most deeply religious races, and of those States in which the attributes of awe, of reverence are salient features, it is surely idle enough to essay an arraignment of war as opposed to religion in general?

Secondly, with regard to a particular religion, the Christian, it is remarkable that Count Tolstoi, who has striven so nobly to reach the faith beyond the creeds, and in his volume entitled *My Religion* has thrown out several illuminating ideas upon the teachings of Christ as distinct from those of later creeds or sects, should not have perceived, or should have ignored the circumstance that in the actual utterances of Christ there is not to be found one word, not one syllable, condemnatory of war between nation and nation, between State and State. The *locus classicus*, "All that take the sword," etc., is aimed at the impetuosity of the person addressed, or at its outmost range against civic revolt. It is only by wrenching the words from their context that it becomes

possible to extend their application to the relations of one State to another. The organic unity, named a State, is not identical with the units which compose it, nor is it a mere aggregate of those units. If there is a lesson which history enforces it is this lesson. And upon the laws which regulate those unities, those unities named States, Christ nowhere breathes a word. The violence of faction or enthusiasm have indeed forced such decision from his utterances. Camille Desmoulins, in a moment of rash and unreasoning rhetoric, styled Him "le bon sans-culotte," and in the days of the *Internationale*, Michel Bakounine traced the beginnings of Nihilism to Galilee; just as in recent times the Anarchist, the Socialist have in His sanction sought the justification of their crimes or their fantasies. But in His whole teaching there is nothing that affects the politics of State and State. Ethics and metaphysics were outlined in His utterances, but not politics. His solitary reference to war as such contains no reprobation; a perverse ingenuity might even twist it into a maxim of prudence, a tacit assent to war. And the peace upon which Christ dwells in one great

phrase after another is not the amity of States, but a profounder, a more intimate thing. It is the peace on which the Hebrew and the Arab poets insist, the peace which arises within the soul, ineffable, wondrous, from a sense of reconciliation, of harmony with the Divine, a peace which may, which does, exist on the battlefield, as in the hermit's cell, in the fury of the onset, as deep and tranquil as in the heart of him who rides alone in the desert beneath the midnight stars. Tolstoi's criticism here arises from his extension to the more complex and intricate unity of the State, of the same laws which regulate the simpler unity of the individuals who compose the State. And of such a war as this in which Britain is now engaged, a war in its origin and course determined by that ideal which in these lectures I have sketched, a war whose end is the larger freedom, the higher justice, a war whose aim is not merely peace, but the full, the living development of those conditions of man's being without which peace is but an empty name, a war whose end is to deepen the life not only of the conquering, but of the conquered State,—who shall assert in the face of Christ's reserve,

that such a war is contrary to the teachings of Galilee?

Finally, as the complement of this condemnation of war as the enemy of religion, men are exhorted, by the refusal of military service or other means, to strive as for the attainment of some fair vision towards the establishment of the empire of perpetual peace. The advent of this new era, it is announced, is at hand.

§ 6. THE IDEAL OF UNIVERSAL PEACE

Now the origins of this ideal are clear. It is ancient as life, and before man was, it was. It is the transference to the sphere of States of the deepest instinctive yearning of all being, from the rock to the soul of man, the yearning towards peace, towards the rest, the immortal leisure which, to apply the phrase of Aristotle, the soul shall know in death, the deeper vision, the unending contemplation, the *theôria* of eternity. The error of its enthusiasts, from Saint-Pierre and Vauvenargues to Herbart and Count Tolstoi, lies in the interpretation of this cosmic desire, deep as the wells of existence itself, and in the extension to the Conditioned of a phase of the Unconditioned.

Will War then never cease? Will universal peace be for ever but a dream? Upon this question, a consideration of the ideal itself, of the forms in which at various epochs it has presented itself, and of the crises at which, appearing or reappearing, it most profoundly engages the imagination of a race, is instructive.

In Hebrew history, for instance, it arises in the hour of defeat, in the consternation of a great race struck by irretrievable disaster. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace!" In this and in other splendid pages of Isaiah we possess the first distinct enunciation of this ideal in world-history, and with what a transforming radiance it is invested! In what a majesty of light and insufferable glory it is uplifted! But it is a vision of the future, to be accomplished in ages undreamed of yet. It is the throb of the Hebrew soul beyond this earthly sphere and beyond this temporal dominion, to the immortal spheres of being, inviolate of Time.

Yet even this vision, though co-terminous with the world, centres in Judæa—in the triumph of the Hebrew race and the over-

throw of all its adversaries. Similarly, to Plato and to Isocrates, to Aristotle and to Aeschines, if peace is to be extended to all the earth "like a river," Hellas is the fountain from which it must flow. It is an imperial peace bounded by Hellenic civilisation, culture, laws.

"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, 'Peace be within thee.'" Substituting Hellas for Jerusalem, this is the prayer of a Greek of the age of Isocrates, of Cleanthes, and of Alexander.

Rome by war ends war, and establishes the *Pax Romana* within her dominions, Spain, Gaul, Africa, Asia, Syria, Egypt. Disregarding the dying counsels of Augustus, Rome remains at truceless war with the world outside those limits. St. Just's proud resignation, "For the revolutionist there is no rest but the grave," is for ever true of those races dowered with the high and tragic doom of empire. To pause is disaster; to recede, destruction. Rome understood this, and her history is its great comment. To Islam the

point at which she can bestow her peace upon men is not less clear, fixed by a power not less unalterable and high. Neither Haroun nor Al-Maimoun could, with all their authority and statecraft, stay the steep course of Islam, for the wisdom of a race is wiser than the wisdom of a man, and the sword which, in Abu Bekr's phrase, the Lord has drawn, Islam sheathes but on the Day of Judgment. Then and then only shall the Holy War end.

The Peace of Islam, *Shalom*, which is its designation, is the serenity of soul of the warriors of God whose life is a warfare unending. And Virgil—in that early masterpiece, which in the Middle Ages won for all his works the felicity or the misfortune attached to the suspicion of an inspiration other than Castalian, and drew to his grave pilgrims fired by an enthusiasm whose fountain was neither the ballad-burthen music of the *Georgics*, nor the measureless pathos and pity for things human of the *Aeneid*—has sung the tranquil beauty of the Saturnian age, yet the peace which suggests his prophetic memory or hope is but the peace of Octavianus, the end of civil discord, of the proscriptions, the conflicts of

Pharsalia, Philippi, Actium, a moment's respite to a war-fatigued world.

Passing from the ancient world to the modern, we encounter in the Middle Age within Europe that which is known amongst mediæval Latinists as the *Treva* or *Treuga Dei.* This "Truce of God" was a decree promulgated throughout Europe for the cessation at certain sacred times of that feudal strife, that war of one noble against another which darkens our early history. It is the mediæval equivalent of the *Pax Romana* and is but dimly related to any ideal of Universal Peace. Hildebrand, who gave this Truce of God more support than any other Pope in the Middle Age, lights the fire of the crusades, giving to war one of the greatest consecrations that war has ever received. And the attitude of Mediæval Europe towards eternal peace is the attitude of Judæa, of Hellas, and of Rome.[8] This is con-

[8] Nevertheless the Truce of God is one of the noblest efforts of mediæval Europe. It drew its origins from southern France, arising partly from the misery of the people oppressed by the constant and bloody strife of feudal princes and barons, heightened at that time by the fury of a pestilence, partly also from a widespread and often fixed and controlling persuasion that with the close of the century the thousand years of the Apocalypse would be fulfilled, and that with the year 1000 A.D. the Day of Judgment would dawn. Ducange has

spicuous in Saint Bernard, the last of the Fathers, and three centuries later in Pius II, the last of the crusading Pontiffs, the desire of whose life was to go even in his old age upon a crusade. This desire uplifts and bears him to his last resting-place in Ancona, where the old man, in his dying dreams, hears the tramp of legions that never came, sees upon the Adriatic the sails of galleys that were to bear the crusaders to Palestine,—yet there were neither armies nor ships, it was but the fever of his dream.

During the Reformation the ideal of Universal Peace is unregarded. The wars of religion, the

collected the evidence bearing on the use of the Latin term, and Semichon's admirable work, *La Paix et la Trève de Dieu, première édition*, 1857, *deuxième édition revue et augmentée*, 1869, sketches the growth of the movement. With the eleventh century, though the social misery is unaltered, the force of the mystic impulse is lost; at the synod of Tuluges in 1027 the days of the week on which the Truce must be observed are limited to two. But towards the close of the century the rising power of Hildebrand and the crusading enthusiasm gave the movement new life, and the days during which all war was forbidden were extended to four of the seven days of the week, those sacred to the Last Supper, Death, Sepulture, and Resurrection. With the decline of the crusading spirit and the rise of monarchical principles the influence and use of the Treuga waned. The verses of the troubadour, Bertrand le Born, are celebrated—"Peace is not for me, but war, war alone! What to me are Mondays and Tuesdays? And the weeks, months, and years, all are alike to me." The stanza fitly expresses the way in which the Truce had come to be regarded by feudal society towards the close of the twelfth century.

world's debate, become the war of creeds. "I am not come to bring peace among you, but a sword." Luther, for instance, declares war against the revolted peasants of Germany with all the ardour and fury with which Innocent III. denounced war against the Albigenses. War in the language and thoughts of Calvin is what it became to Oliver Cromwell, to the Huguenots, and to the Scottish Covenanters, to Jean Chevallier and the insurgents of the Cevennes. As Luther in the sixteenth century represents the religious side of the Reformation, so Grotius in the seventeenth century represents the position of the legists of the Reformation. In his work, *De Jure Belli ac Pacis*, Universal Peace as an object of practical politics, is altogether set aside. War is accepted as existent between nation and nation, State and State, and Grotius lays down the laws which regulate it. Similar attempts had been made in the religious councils of Greece, and when the first great Saracen army was starting upon its conquests, the first of the Khalifs delivered to that army instructions which in their humanity have never been surpassed; the utmost observances of chivalry or modern times are there anticipated. But the

treatise of Grotius is the first elaboration of the subject in the method of his contemporary, Verulam,—the method of the science of the future.

In the eighteenth century the singular work of the mild and amiable enthusiast, the Abbé de Saint-Pierre,[9] made a profound impression upon the thought not only of his own but of succeeding generations. Kings, princes, philosophers, sat in informal conference debating the same argument as has recently occupied the dignitaries at the Hague. It inspired some of the most earnest pages of D'Alembert and of the Encyclopédie. It drew from Voltaire some happy invective, affording the opportunity of airing once more his well-loved but worthless

[9] St.-Pierre's work appeared in 1712, three years after Malplaquet, the most sanguinary struggle of the Marlborough wars. It is thus synchronous with the last gloomy years of Louis XIV., when France and her king also, seemed sinking into the mortal lethargy of Jesuitism. St.-Simon in his early volumes has written the history of these years. Voltaire accuses St.-Pierre of originating or encouraging the false impression that he had derived his theory from the Dauphin, the pupil of Fénelon and the Marcellus of the French Monarchy. An English translation of St.-Pierre's treatise was published in 1714 with the following characteristic title-page:—"A Project for settling an Everlasting Peace in Europe, first proposed by Henry IV. of France, and approved of by Queen Elizabeth and most of the Princes of Europe, and now discussed at large and made practicable by the Abbot St. Pierre of the French Academy."

paradox on the trivial causes from which the great actions of history arise. Saint-Pierre's ideal informs the early chapters of Gibbon's History, but its influence disappears as the work advances. It charmed the fancy of Rousseau, and, by a curious irony, he inflamed by his impassioned argument that war for freedom which is to the undying glory of France.[10]

A letter which Frederick in his extreme age wrote to Voltaire may be taken as the summing up of this tedious debate by one of the greatest kings of his own or of any age. "I am old, cheerful, gouty, good-humoured. Now that Poland has been settled by a little ink and a pen, the Encyclopédie cannot declaim against mercenary brigands. For the future I cannot vouch. Running over the pages of history I see that ten years never pass without a war.

[10] As late as 1791 we find Priestley looking to the French Revolution as the precursor of the era of Universal Peace. In a discourse delivered at "the Meeting House in the Old-Jewry, 27th April 1791," he describes the "glorious enthusiasm which has for its objects the flourishing of science and the extinction of wars." France, he declares, "has ensured peace to itself and to other nations at the same time, cutting off almost every possible cause of war," and enables us "to prognosticate the approach of the happy times in which the sure prophecies of Scripture inform us that wars shall cease and universal peace and harmony take place."

This intermittent fever may have moments of respite, but cease, never!"

This is the last word of the eighteenth century upon the dream of Universal Peace—a word spoken by the greatest of the kings, looking out with dying eyes upon a world about to close in one of the deadliest yet most heroic and memorable conflicts set down in the annals of our race. The Hundred Days are its epilogue,—the war of twenty-five years ending in that great manner! Then, like a pallid dawn, the ideal once more arises. Congress after congress meets in ornamental debate, till six can be reckoned, or even seven, culminating in the recent conference at the Hague. Its derisive results, closing the debate of the nineteenth, as Frederick's words sum the debate of the eighteenth century, are too fresh in all men's memories to require a syllable of comment.

Thus then it appears from a glance at its history that this ideal of Universal Peace has stirred the imagination most deeply, first of all in the ages when an empire, whether Persian, Hebraic, Hellenic, or Roman, conterminous with earth, wide as the inhabited world, was still in appearance realisable; or, again, in

periods of defeat, or of civil strife, as in the closing age of the Roman oligarchy; or in the moments of exhaustion following upon long-continued and desolating war, as in Modern Europe after the last phases of the Reformation conflict, the wars of Tilly and Wallenstein, of Marlborough and Eugène, and of Frederick. The familiar poetry in praise of peace, and the utopias, the composition of which has amused the indolence of scholars or the leisure of statesmen, originate in such hours or in such moods. On the other hand, the criticism of war, scornful or ironic, of the great thinkers and speculative writers of modern times, when it is not merely the phantom of their logic, an *eidôlon specus* created by their system, arises in the most impressive instances less from admiration or desire or hope of perpetual peace than from the arraignment of all life, and all the ideals, activities, and purposes of men.

Hence the question whether war be a permanent condition of human life is answered by implication. For the history of the ideal of Universal Peace but re-enforces that definition of war set forth above, as a manifestation of the world-spirit, co-extensive with being,

and as such, inseparable from man's life here and now. In all these great wars which we have touched upon, the conflict of two ideas, in the Platonic sense of the word, unveils itself, but both ideas are ultimately phases of one Idea. It is by conflict alone that life realises itself. That is the be-all and end-all of life as such, of Being as such. From the least developed forms of structural or organic nature to the highest form in which the world-force realises itself, the will and imagination of Man, this law is absolute. The very magic of the stars, their influence upon the human heart, derives something of its potency, one sometimes fancies, from the vast, the silent, mighty strife, the victorious energy, which brings their rays across the abysses and orbits of the worlds.

What is the art of Hellas but the conquest of the rock, the marble, and the fixing there in perennial beauty, perennial calm, the thought born from the travail of the sculptor's brain, or from the unrecorded struggle of dark forces in the past, which emerge now in a vision of transcendent rapture and light? By this conflict, multiplex or simple, the conquering energy

of the form, the defeated energy of the material, the serenity of the statues of Phidias, of the tragedies of Sophocles, is attained. They are the symbol, the visible embodiment of the moment of deepest vision, and of the deepest agony now at rest there, a loveliness for ever. And as the æons recede, as the intensity of the idea of the Divine within man increases, so does this conflict, this *agonia* increase. It is in the heart of the tempest that the deepest peace dwells.

The power, the place of conflict thus great in Art, is in the region of emotional, of intellectual and of moral life, admittedly supreme. Doubt, contrition of soul, and the other modes of spiritual *agonia*, are not these equivalent with the life, not death, of the soul?

And those moments of serenest peace, when the desire of the heart is one with the desire of the world-soul, are not these attained by conflict? In the life of the State, the soul of the State, as composed of such monads, such constituent forms and organic elements, each penetrated and impelled by the divine, self-realising, omnipresent *nisus*, how vain to hope, to desire, to pray, that *there* this mystic all-pervading Force, this onward-striving, this

conflict, which is as it were the very essence and necessary law of being, should pause and have an end! War may change its shape, the struggle here intensifying, there abating; it may be uplifted by ever loftier purposes and nobler causes,—but cease? How shall it cease?

Indeed, in the light of History, universal peace appears less as a dream than as a nightmare which shall be realised only when the ice has crept to the heart of the sun, and the stars, left black and trackless, start from their orbits.

§ 7. IMPERIALISM AND WAR

If war then be a permanent factor in the life of States, how, it may be asked, will it be affected by Imperialism and by such an ideal as this of Imperial Britain? The effects upon war, will, I should say, be somewhat of this nature. It will greaten and exalt the character of war. Not only in constitutional, but in foreign politics, the roots of the present lie deep in the past. In the wars of an imperial State, the ideals of all the wars of the past still live, adding a fuller life to the life of the

present. From the earliest tribal forays, slowly broadening through the struggles of feudalism and Plantagenet kings, to the wars of the nation, one creative purpose, one informing principle links century to century, developing itself at last in the wars of empire, wars for the larger freedom, the higher justice. And this ideal differs from the ideal of primitive times as the vast complexity of races, peoples, religions, climates, traditions, literatures, arts, manners, laws, which the word "Britain" now conceals, differs from the 'companies' and 'hundreds' of daring warriors who followed the fortunes of a Cerdic or an Uffa. For the State which by conquest or submission is merged in the life of another State does not thereby evade that law of conflict of which I have spoken, but becomes subject to that law in the life of the greater State, national or imperial, of which it now forms a constituent and organic part. And looming already on the horizon, the wars of races rise portentous, which will touch to purposes yet higher and more mystic the wars of empires,—as these have greatened the wars of nationalities, these again the wars of feudal kings, of principalities, of cities, of tribes or clans.

Secondly, this ideal of Imperial Britain will greaten and exalt the action of the soldier, hallowing the death on the battlefield with the attributes at once of the hero and the martyr. Thus, when M. Bloch and similar writers delineate war as robbed by modern inventions of its pomp and circumstance, when they expatiate upon the isolation resulting from a battle-line extended across leagues, and upon the "zone of death" separating the opposing hosts, one asks in perplexity, to what end does M. Bloch consider that war was waged in the past? For the sake of such emotional excitement or parade as are now by smokeless powder, maxims, long-range rifles, and machine guns abolished? These are but the trappings, the outward vesture of war; the cause, the sacred cause, is by this transformation in the methods of war all untouched. Was there then no "zone of death" between the armies at Eylau or at Gravelotte? Let but the cause be high, and men will find means to cross that zone, now as then,—by the sapper's art if by no other! And as the pride and ostentation of battle are effaced, its inner glory and dread sanctity are the more evinced. The battle-

field is an altar; the sacrifice the most awful that the human eye can contemplate or the imagination with all its efforts invent. "The drum," says a French moralist, "is the music of battle, because it deadens thought." But in modern warfare the faculties are awake. Solitude is the touchstone of valour, and the modern soldier cast in upon himself, undazzled, unblinded, faces death singly. Fighting for ideal ends, he dies for men and things that are not yet; he dies, knowing in his heart that they may never be at all. Courage and self-renunciation have attained their height.

Nor have strategy and the mechanical appliances of modern warfare turned the soldier into a machine, an automaton, devoid of will and self-directing energy. Contemporary history makes it daily clearer that in modern battles brain and nerve count as heavily as they ever did in the combats by the Scamander or the Simois. Another genius, and another epic style than those of Homer may be requisite fitly to celebrate them, but the theme assuredly is not less lofty, the heroism less heroic, the triumph or defeat less impressive!

Twice, and twice only, is man inevitably alone—in the hour of death and the hour of his birth. Man, alone always, is then supremely alone. In that final solitude what are pomp and circumstance to the heart? That which strengthens a man then, whether on the battlefield or at the stake or in life's unrecorded martyrdoms, is not the cry of present onlookers nor the hope of remembering fame, but the faith for which he has striven, or his conception of the purposes, the ends in which the nation for which he is dying, lives and moves and has its being. Made strong by this, he endures the ordeal, the hazard of death, in the full splendour of the war, or at its sullen, dragging close, or in the battle's onset, or on patrol, the test of the dauntless, surrendering the sight of the sun, the coming of spring, and all that the arts and various wisdom of the centuries have added of charm or depth to nature's day. And in the great hour, whatever his past hours have been, consecrate to duty or to ease, to the loftiest or to the least-erected aims, whether he is borne on triumphant to the dread pause, the vigil which is the night after a battle, or falling he sinks by a fatal touch, and the noise of

victory is hushed in the coming of the great silence, and the darkness swoons around him, and the cry "Press on!" stirs no pulsation any longer—in that great hour he is lifted to the heights of the highest, the prophet's rapt vision, the poet's moment of serenest inspiration, or what else magnifies or makes approximate to the Divine this mortal life of ours.

War thus greatened in character by its ideal, the phrase of the Greek orator, let me repeat, is no longer an empty sound, but vibrates with its original life—"How fortunate the dead who have fallen in battle! And how fortunate are you to whom sorrow comes in so glorious a shape!" An added solemnity invests the resolutions of senates, and the prayer on the battlefield, "Through death to life," acquires a sincerity more moving and a simplicity more heroic. And these, I imagine, will be the results of Imperialism and of this deepening consciousness of its destiny in Imperial Britain, whether in war which is the act of the State as a whole, or in the career of the soldier which receives its consummation there in the death on the battlefield.

LECTURE VI

THE VICISSITUDES OF STATES AND EMPIRES

[Tuesday, 3rd July 1900.]

HAVING considered in the first lecture a definition of Imperialism, and traced in the second and third the development in religion and in politics of the ideal of Imperial Britain, and having afterwards examined the relations of this ideal to the supreme questions of War and Peace, an inquiry not less momentous, but from its intangible and even mystic character less capable of definite resolution, now demands attention. How is this ideal of the Imperialistic State related to that from which all States originally derive? How is it related to the Divine? From the consideration of this problem two others arise, that of the vicissitudes of States and Empires, and that of the destiny of this Empire of Imperial Britain.

From the analogy of the Past is it possible to apprehend even dimly the curve which this Empire, moved by a new ideal, and impelled by the deepening consciousness of its destiny, will describe amongst the nations and the peoples of the earth?

Empire, we have seen, is the highest expression of the soul of the State; it is the complete, the final consummation of the life of the State. But the State, the soul of the State, is in itself but a unity that is created from the units, the individuals which compose it. Nevertheless the unity of the State which results from those units is not the same unity, nor is it subject to, or governed by, the same laws as regulate the life of the individual. Not only the arraignment of the maxims of statesmen as immoral, but the theories, fantastic or profound, of the rise and fall of States, are marred or rendered idle utterly by the initial confusion of the organic unity of the State with the unity of the individual. But though no composite unity is governed by the same laws as govern its constituent atoms, nevertheless that unity must partake of the nature of its constituent atoms, change as they change,

mutually transforming and transformed. So is this unity of the State influenced by the units which compose it, which are the souls of men.

§ I. THE METAPHYSICAL ORIGIN OF THE STATE

Consider then, first of all, in relation to the consciousness which is the attribute of the life of the State, the consciousness which is the soul of man. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, as we have seen, the saintly ideal which had hitherto controlled man's life dies to the higher thought of Europe. The saint gives place to the crusader and scholastic, and the imagination of the time acknowledges the spell of oriental paganism and oriental culture.

Certain of the most remarkable minds of that epoch, men like Berengarius of Tours, for instance, or St. Victor, and Amalrich, are profoundly troubled by a problem of the following nature. How shall the justice of God be reconciled with the destiny He assigns to the souls of men? They are sent forth from their rest in the Divine to dwell in habitations of mortal flesh, incurring reprobation and exile everlasting, or after a season returning, according

as they are appointed to a life dark to the sacrifice on Calvary, or to a life by that Blood redeemed. By what law or criterion of right does God send forth those souls, emanations of His divinity, to a doom of misery or bliss, according as they are attached to a body north of the Mediterranean, or southward of that sea, within the sway of the falsest of false prophets, Mohammed? This trouble in the heart of the eleventh century arose from the insight which compassion gives; the European imagination, at rest with regard to its own safety, is for the first time perplexed by the fate of men of an alien race and faith, whose heroism it has nevertheless learnt to revere, as in after-times it was perplexed in pondering the fate of Greece and Rome, whose art and thought it vainly strove to imitate. Underlying this trouble in their hearts is the assumption to which Plato and certain of his sect have leanings, that within the Divine there is as it were a treasury of souls from which individual essences are sped hither, to dwell within each mortal body immediately on its birth.

Now in an earlier age than the age of Berengarius and St. Victor, there arose within

Alexandria one whose thought in its range, in the sweep of its orbit, was perhaps the widest and most distant amongst the children of men. In the most remarkable and sublime of his six *Enneads*, another theory upon the same subject occurs.[1] The fate of the soul in passing from its home with the Everlasting is like the fate of a child which in infancy has been removed from its parents, and reared in a foreign land. The child forgets its country and its kindred as the soul forgets in the joy of its freedom the felicity it knew when one with the Divine. But after the lapse of years if the child return amongst its kindred, at first indeed it shall not know them, but now a word, now a gesture, or again a trick of the hand, a cadence of the voice, will come to it like the murmur of forgotten seas by whose shores it once had dwelt, awaking within it

[1] In Volkmann's edition, the sole attempt at a critical text worthy of the name that has yet been made, the passage runs as follows:—

ὥσπερ παῖδες εὐθὺς ἀποσπασθέντες ἀπὸ πατέρων καὶ πολὺν χρόνον πόρρω τραφέντες ἀγνοοῦσι καὶ ἑαυτοὺς καὶ πατέρας. οὔτ᾽ οὖν ἔτι ἐκεῖνον οὔτε ἑαυτὰς ὁρῶσαι, ἀτιμάσασαι ἑαυτὰς ἀγνοίᾳ τοῦ γένους, τιμήσασαι τἆλλα καὶ πάντα μᾶλλον ἢ ἑαυτὰς θαυμάσασαι καὶ πρὸς αὐτὰ ἐκπλαγεῖσαι καὶ ἀγασθεῖσαι καὶ ἐξηρτημέναι τούτων ἀπέρρηξαν ὡς οἷόν τε ἑαυτὰς ὧν ἀπεστράφησαν ἀτιμάσασαι. . . . διὸ δεῖ διττὸν γίνεσθαι τὸν λόγον πρὸς τοὺς οὕτω διακειμένους, εἴπερ τις ἐπιστρέψοι αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ ἐναντία καὶ τὰ πρῶτα καὶ ἀνάγοι μέχρι τοῦ ἀκροτάτου καὶ ἑνὸς καὶ πρώτου.

strange memories, and gradually by the accumulation of these the truth will at last flash in upon the child—"Behold my father and my brethren!" So the soul of man, though knowing not whence it came, is by the teachings of Divine wisdom, and by inspired thinkers, quickened to a remembrance of its heavenly origin, and its life henceforth becomes an ever-increasing, ever more vivid memory of the ecstasy, the peace, the bliss that it knew there within the Everlasting.

Let me attempt to apply this thought of the Egyptian mystic to the problem before us. Disregarding the theory of an infinite series of successive incarnations from the inexhaustible treasury of the Divine, permit me to recall the observations made in an earlier lecture on the contrast between the limited range of man's consciousness, and the measureless past stretching behind him, the infinite spaces around him.

Judged by the perfect ideal of knowledge, the universe is necessary to the understanding of a flower, and the dateless past to the intelligence of the history of a day. But as the beam of light never severs itself from its

fountain, as the faintest ray that falls within the caverns of the sea remains united with the orb whence it sprang, so the soul of man has grown old along with nature, and acquainted from its foundations with the fabric of the universe.

Therefore when it confronts some simple object of sense or emotion, or the more intricate movements and events of history, or the rushing storm of the present, the soul has about it strange intimacies, it has within it preparations drawn from that fellowship with nature throughout the æons, the abysses of Eternity. And as the æons advance, the soul grows ever more conscious of the end of all its striving, and its serenity deepens as the certainty of the ultimate attainment of that end increases.

Baulked of its knowledge of an hour by its ignorance of Eternity, it attains its rest in the Infinite, which seeking it shall find, piercing through every moment of the transient to the Eternal. What are the spaces and the labyrinthian dance of the worlds to the soul which is ever more profoundly absorbed, remembering, knowing, or in vision made prescient of its identity with the soul of the universe? And as the ages recede, the immanence of the

Divine becomes more consciously, more pervadingly present. Earth deepens in mystery; premonitions of its destiny visit the soul, falling manifold as the shadows of twilight, or in mysterious tones far-borne and deep as the chords struck by the sweeping orbs in space.

The soul thus neglects the finite save as an avenue to the infinite, and holds knowledge in light esteem unless as a path to the wonder, the ecstasy, and the wisdom which are beyond knowledge. The past is dead, the present is a dream, the future is not yet, but in the Eternal NOW, the soul is one with that Reality of which the remotest pasts, the farthest presents, the most distant futures, are but changing phases.

If then we regard the soul, its origin and its destiny, in this manner, what a wonder of light invests its history within Time! Banished from its primal abode beyond the crystal walls of space, with what achievements has not the exile graced the earth, its habitation! Wondrous indeed is man's course across the earth, and with what shall the works of his soul be compared? From those first uncertainties, those faltering elations, the Vision, dimly dis-

cerned as yet, lures him with tremulous ecstasies to eternise the fleeting, and in columned enclosure and fretted canopy to uprear an image which he can control of the arch of heaven and the unsustained architecture of the stars. These outreach his mortal grasp, outwearying his scrutiny, blinding his intelligence; but, master of the image, his soul knows again by reflection the felicity which it knew when one with the Shaper of the worlds.

And thus the soul mounts, steep above steep, from the rudely hewn granite to the breathing marbles of the Parthenon, to the hues of Titian, to the forests in stone, the domes and minarets, and the gemmed splendour of later races, to the drifted snows of the Taj-Mahal, irridescent with diamond and pearl.

Yea, from those first imaginings, caught from the brooding rocks, and moulded in the substance of the rocks, still it climbs, instructed by the winds, the ocean's tidal rhythm, and the tumultuous transports of the human voice, its raptures, sorrows, or despairs, to the newer wonder, the numbered cadences of poetry, the verse of Homer, Sophocles, and Shakespeare.

And at the last, lessoned by those ancient

instructors, winds and tides, and the ever-moving spheres of heaven, how does the soul attain its glory, and in Music, the art of arts, the form of forms, poise on the starry battlements of God's dread sanctuary, tranced in prayer, in wonder ineffable, at the long pilgrimage accomplished at last,—in the *adagio* of the great Concerto, in the *Requiem*, or that later strain of transhuman sadness and serenity transhuman, in which the soul hears again the song sung by the first star that ever left the shaping hands of God and took its way alone through the lonely spaces, pursuing an untried path across the dark, the silent abysses,—how dark, how silent!—a moving harmony, foreboding even then in its first separate delight and sorrow of estrangement all the anguish and all the ecstasy that the unborn universes of which it is the herald and precursor yet shall know,—the Wuotan *motif* of the Rheingold.

Aristotle indeed affirms that in the universe there are many things more excellent than man, the planets, for instance. He is thinking of the mighty yet perfect curve which they describe, though with all the keenness of his

analytic perception, he is in this judgment not unaffected by the fancy, current in his time, that those planets are living things each with its attendant soul, which shapes its orbit and that fixed path athwart the night. How much higher a will that steadfast motion argues than the wavering purposes, the unstable desires of human life. But we know that the planet with all its mighty curve is but as the stage to the piece enacted thereon ; it is the moving theatre on which the drama of life, from its first dark unconscious motions to the freest energy of the soul in its airy imaginings, is accomplished. And the thought of Pascal which might be a rejoinder to this of Aristotle is well known, that though the universe rise up against man to destroy him, yet man is greater than the universe, because he knows that he dies, but of its power to destroy the universe knows nothing.

If this then be the origin of the individual soul, and if its recorded and unrecorded history and action in the universe be of this height, it is not astonishing that the laws and operations of the soul of the State, which is of an order yet more complex and mysterious, should baffle

investigation, and foil the most assiduous efforts to reduce them to a system, and compel speculation to have recourse to such false analogies and misleading resemblances as those to which reference has in these lectures more than once been made.

§ 2. THE STATE, EMPIRES, AND ART

Thus we trace the unity of the State to the unity of the individual soul, and thence to the Divine unity. The soul of the State is the higher, the more complex unity, and it is not merely in the actions of the individual in relation to or as an organic part of the State that we must seek for the entire influence of the State upon individual life, or for the perfect expression of the abstract energy of the State in itself and by itself. Man in such relations does often merit the reprobation of Rousseau, and his theory of the deteriorating effects of a complex unity upon the single unity of the individual soul seems often to find justification. Similarly, the exclusive admiration of many unwitting disciples of Rousseau for the deeds of the individual as opposed to the deeds of the

State, for art as opposed to politics, discovers in a first study of these relations strong support. But the artist is not isolated and self-dependent. If the supreme act of a race is War, if its supreme thought is its religion, and its supreme poems, its language,—deeds, thoughts, and poems to which the whole race has contributed, —so in manifold, potent, if unperceived ways the State affects those energisings in art and thought which seem most independent of the State. The sentence of Aristotle is familiar, "The solitary man is either a brute or a god," but the solitariness whether of the Thebaid or of Fonte Avellano, of Romualdo, Damiani, or of that Yogi, who, to exhibit his hate and scorn of life, flung himself into the flames in the presence of Alexander, is yet indebted and bound by ties invisible, mystic, innumerable, to the State, to the race, for the structural design of the soul itself, for that very pride, that isolating power which seems most to sever it from the State. And who shall determine the limits of the unconscious life which in that lonely contemplation or that lonelier scorn, the soul receives from the State? For from the same source the component and the composite,

the constituent and the constituted unity alike arise, and the Immanence that is in each is One. "Whither shall I go from Thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from Thee; but the night shineth as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee."

The everyday topic which makes man "the creature of his time" derives whatever truth it possesses from this unity, but Sophocles did not write the *Ajax* because Miltiades fought at Marathon, nor Tirso, *El Condennado* because Cortez defeated Montezuma. Whatever law connect greatness in art and greatness in action, it is not the law of cause and effect, of necessary succession in time. They are the mutually dependent manifestations of the same immortal energy which uplifts the whole State, whose motions arise from beyond Time, the

roots of whose being are beyond the region of cause and effect.

Consider now as an illustration of the interdependence of the soul of the individual and of the State, and of the immanence in each, of the Divine, the relation which world-history reveals as existing between the higher manifestations of the life of the individual and of the State. The greatest achievements of individual men, whether in action, or in art, or in thought, are, it will generally be found, coincident with, and synchronous with, the highest form which in its development the State assumes, that is, with some form or mode of empire. For it is not merely the art of Phidias, of Sophocles, that springs from the energy aroused by the Persian invasions; the energy which finds expression in the Empire of Athens is to be traced thither, empire and art arising from the same exaltation of the State and of the individual. But they are not related as cause and effect, nor is the art of Sophocles *caused* by Marathon; but the *Agamemnon* and Salamis, the Parthenon and the *Ajax*, are incarnations in words, in deeds, or in marble of the divine Idea immanent in the whole race of the Hellenes. A race capable of empire,

the civic form of imperialism, thus arises simultaneously with its greatest achievements in art. Similarly in the civic State of mediæval Florence, the age of Leonardo and of Savonarola is also the age of Lorenzo, when in politics Florence competes with Venice and the Borgias for the hegemony of Italy, and the actual bounds of her civic empire are at their widest. So in Venetian history empire and art reach their height together, and the age which succeeds that of Giorgione and of Titian is an end not only to the painting but to the political greatness of Venice.

As in civic so in national empires. In Spain, Charles V. and the Philips are the tyrants of the greatest single military power and of the first nation of the earth, and have as their subjects Rojas and Tirso, Lope and Cervantes, Calderon and Velasquez. Racine and Molière serve *le grand Monarque*, as Apelles served Alexander. The mariners who sketched the bounds of this empire, which is at last attaining to the full consciousness of its mighty destinies, were the contemporaries of Marlowe and Webster, of Beaumont and Ford.

Napoleon's fretful impatience that his victories

should have as their literary accompaniments only the wan tragedies of Joseph Chénier and the unleavened odes of Millevoye was just. An empire so glorious, if based on the people's will, should not have found in the genius of the age its sworn antagonist. This stamped his empire as spurious.

But these simultaneous phenomena, these supreme attainments at once in action and in art, are not connected as cause and effect. For the roots of their identity we must search deeper. The transcendent deed and the work of art alike have their origin in the *élan* of the soul, the diviner vision or the diviner desire. The will which becomes the deed, the vision which becomes the poem or the picture, are here as yet one; and this *élan*, this energy of the soul, what is it but the energy of the infinite within the finite, of the eternal within time? Art in whatever perfection it attains is but an illustration, imperfect, of the spirit of man. The greatest books that ever were written, the most exquisite sculptures that ever were carved, the most delicate temples that ever were reared, the richest paintings that ever came from Titian are all in themselves ultimately but the

dust of the soul of him who composes them, builds them, carves them. The unrevealed and the unrevealable is the soul itself that in such works is dimly adumbrated. The most perfect statue is but an imperfect semblance of the beauty which the sculptor beheld, though intensifying and reacting upon, and even in a sense consummating, that inward vision; and the sublimest energy of imperial Rome derives its tragic height from the degree to which it realises the energy of the race.

In the Islam of Omar this law displays itself supremely, and with a flame-like vividness. There the divine origin of the State which in the Athens of Pericles is hidden or revealed in the myriad forms of art, plastic or poetic, in the Rome of Sulla or Cæsar in tragic action, displays itself in naked purity and in majesty unadorned. If artistic loveliness marks the age of Sophocles, tragic grandeur the Rome of Augustus, mystic sublimity is the feature of the Islam of Omar. The thought and the deed, λόγος καὶ ποίησις, here are one.

§ 3. THE FALL OF EMPIRES: THE THEORY OF RETRIBUTION

We have now reached the final stage of our inquiry. Is there any law by which the vicissitudes of the States, whose origin has been traced through the individual to a remoter and more awful source, are fixed and directed? And can the decay of empires, those supreme forms in the development of States, be resolved into its determining causes, or do we here confront a movement which is beyond the sphere ruled by cause and effect?

In Western Europe a broken arch and some fragments of stone are often all that mark the place where stood some perfect achievement of mediæval architecture, a feudal stronghold or an abbey. But on the lower plains of the Euphrates and Tigris, a ruin hardly more conspicuous may denote the seat of an empire. Such a region, fronting the desert, formed a fit theatre for man's first speculations upon his own destiny and that of empires. Those two inquiries have proceeded together. His vision of the universe, original or accepted, inevitably shapes and transforms the poet's, the pro-

phet's, or the historian's vision of any portion of that universe, however limited in time and space.

Hebrew literature, affected by the revolutions of Assyria, Chaldæa, Media, and Egypt, already discloses two theories which, modified or applied, mould man's thought when bent to this problem down to the present hour. Round one or other of these conceptions the speculations of over two thousand years naturally group themselves.

The first of these theories, which may be styled the Theory of Retribution, attributes the decay of empires to the visitation of a divine vengeance. The fall of an empire is the punishment of sin and of wrong-doing. The pride and iniquity of the few, or the corruption and ethical degeneration of the mass, involves the ruin of the State. Regardless of the contradictions to this law in the life of the individual, its supremacy in the life of empires has throughout man's history been decreed and proclaimed. Hebrew thought was perplexed and amazed from the remotest periods at the felicity of the oppressor and the unjust man, and the misery of the good.

But the sublime and inspired rhetoric of Isaiah rests upon the assumption that the punishment of wrong, uncertain amongst men, is sure amongst empires.

In a more ethical form this conception is easily traced throughout Greek and Roman thought. In St. Augustine it reappears in its original shape, and invested with the dignity, the fulness, and the precision of an historical argument. A Roman by birth, culture, and youthful sympathies, loving the sad cadences of Virgil like a passion, admitted by Cicero to an intimacy with Hellenic thought, he is, later in life, attracted, fascinated, and finally subdued by the ideal of the Nazarene, and by the poetry and history behind it. He sees Rome fall; and what the fate of Babylon was to the Hebrew prophet the fate of Rome becomes to Augustinus, the symbol of divine wrath, the punishment of her pride, her idolatry, and her sin. Rome falls as Babylon, as Assyria fell; but in the *De Civitate*, to which he devotes some fifteen years of his life, is delineated the city which shall not pass away.[2] The

[2] The writings of St. Augustine by their extraordinary variety, vast intellectual range, and the impression of a distinct personal

destruction of Rome, limited in time and space, coalesces with the wider thought of the Stoics, the destruction of the world.

So to the Middle Age the fall of Rome was but an argument for the theme of the passing away of earth itself and all earthly things like a scroll. Before its imagination, as along a highroad, passed a procession of empires,—Assyria, Media, Babylon, Greece, Rome, Persia, and at the last, as a shadowy dream of all these, the Empire of Charlemagne and of the Othos. Their successive falls point to man's obstinacy in sin, and the recurrence of the event to the nearness of the Judgment.

The treatises of Damiani, Otho of Freis-

utterance which flows from every page at which they are opened, exercise upon the imagination an effect like that which the works of Diderot or Goethe alone of moderns have the power to reproduce. The *De Civitate* is his greatest and most sustained effort, and though controversial in intention it reaches again and again an epic sublimity both in imagery and diction. The peoples and empires of the world are the heroes, and the part which Augustine assigns to the God of all the earth has curious reminiscences of the parts played by the deities in pagan poetry. Over the style the influence of Virgil is supreme. Criticism indeed offers few more alluring tasks than the attempt to gauge the comparative effects of the Virgilian cadences upon the styles of the men of after times who loved them most,—Tacitus and St. Augustine, Dante, Racine, and Flaubert.

ingen,[3] and of the Cardinal Lothar, formulate the argument, and as late as the seventeenth century Bossuet dedicates to this same theme an eloquence not less impressive and finished than that of Augustine himself. In recent times this theory influences strongly the historical conceptions of Ruskin and Carlyle. It is the informing thought of Ruskin's greatest work, *The Stones of Venice.* The value of that work is imperishable, because the documents upon which it is based are by the wasting force of wind and sun and sea daily passing beyond scrutiny or comparison. Yet its philosophy is but an echo of the philosophy of Carlyle's second period, and as ever, the disciple exaggerates the teachings of the master. The bent of Carlyle's genius was nearer that of Rousseau than he ever permitted

[3] The *World-History* of Otho of Freisingen was modelled upon the *De Civitate* of St. Augustine. He styles it the "Book of the Two Cities," *i.e.* Babylon and Jerusalem, and sketches from the mediæval standpoint the course of human life from the origin of the world to the year 1146 A.D. His work on the Apocalypse and his impression of the Last Judgment are a fitting close to the whole. He is uncritical in the use of his materials, but conveys a distinct impression of his habits of thought; and something of the brooding calm of a mediæval monastery invests the work. In the following year he started on the crusade of Konrad III., his half-brother; but returning in safety, wrote his admirable annals of the early deeds of the hero of the age, the emperor Barbarossa.

himself to imagine. In the Cromwelliad Carlyle elaborates the fancy that the one great and heroic period of English history is that of Cromwell, and that in a return to the principles of that era lies the salvation of England. Similarly Ruskin allots to Venice its great and heroic period, ascribing that greatness to the fidelity of the people of Venice to the standard of St. Mark and the ideal of Christianism of which that standard was the emblem. But in the sixteenth century Venice swerved from this ideal, and her fall is the consequence.

In all such speculations a method has been applied to the State identical with that indicated in the second lecture. They exhibit the effort of the human mind to discover in the universe the evolution of a design in harmony with its own conception of what individual life is or ought to be. Genius, beauty, virtue, the breast consecrated to lofty aims, are still the dearest target to disaster, and to the blind assaults of fate and man. In individual life, therefore, the primitive conception has been modified, but in the wider and more intricate life of a State the endless variety of incidents, characters, fortunes, the succession

of centuries, and of modes of thought, literatures, arts, creeds, the revolutions in political ideals, offer so complex a mass of phenomena that the breakdown of the theory, patent at once in the narrower sphere of observation, is here obscured and shielded from detection. Man's intellect is easily the dupe of the heart's desire, and in the brief span of human life willingly carries a fiction to the grave. And he who defends a pleasing dream is necessarily honoured amongst men more than the visionary whose course is towards the glacier heights and the icy solitudes of thought.

§ 4. THE FALL OF EMPIRES: THE CYCLIC THEORY

The second theory is that of a cycle in human affairs, which controls the rise and fall of empires by a law similar to that of the seasons and the revolutions of the heavenly bodies. This theory varies little; the metaphors, the figures by which it is darkened or made clearer change, but the essential idea remains one in the great myth of Plato or in the Indian epics, in the rigid steel-clasped

system of Vico, or in the sentimental musings of Volney. The vicissitudes are no more determined by the neglect or performance of religious rites or certain ethical rules. Man's life is regarded as part of the universal scheme of things, and the fate of empires as subject to natural laws. The mode in which this theory originates, thus connects itself at once with the mode of the Chaldæan astrology and modern evolution.

It appears late in the development of Hebrew thought, and finds its most remarkable expression in the fragment, the writer of which is now not unfrequently spoken of as "Khoëleth."[4] "One generation passeth away and another generation cometh; but the earth abideth for ever. The sun also riseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place, where he arose. The wind goeth towards the south and turneth about unto the north, it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits. The

[4] The origin, the meaning, the number, and even the gender of this word have all been disputed. Thus the use of the original is convenient as it avoids committal to any one of the numerous theories of theologians or Hebraists. Delitzsch has sifted the evidence with scrupulous care and impartiality, whilst Renan's monograph possesses both erudition and charm.

thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done, is that which shall be done, and there is no new thing under the sun. Is there anything whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us. There is no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after."

The writings of Machiavelli reveal a mind based on the same deeps as Khoëleth, brooding on the same world-wide things. Like him, he looks out into the black and eyeless storm, the ceaseless drift of atoms; like him, he surveys the States and Empires of the past, and sees in their history, their revolutions, their rise and decline, but the history of the wind which, in the Hebrew phrase, goes circling in its circles, *sovăv sovēv*, and returneth to the place whence it came, and universal darkness awaits the world, and oblivion universal the tedious story of man. In work after work of Machiavelli, letters, tales, dramas, historical and political treatises, this conception recurs. It is the central and informing thought of his life as a philosophical thinker. But unlike Vico,

Machiavelli avoids becoming the slave of a theory. He shadows forth this system of some dim cycle in human affairs as a conception in which his own mind finds quiescence, if not rest. Its precise character he nowhere describes.

Amongst philosophical historians Tacitus occupies a unique position. He rivals Dante in the cumulative effect of sombre detail and in the gloomy energy which hate supplies. In depth and variety of creative insight he approaches Balzac,[5] whilst in his peculiar province, the psychology of death, he stands alone. His is the most profoundly imaginative nature that Rome produced. Three centuries before the fall of Rome he appears to apprehend or to forbode that event, and he turns to a consideration of the customs of the Teutonic race as if already in the first century he discerned the very manner of the cataclysm of the fourth.

[5] What figures from the *Comédie Humaine* of Roman society of the first century throng the pages of Tacitus,—Sejanus, Arruntius, Piso, Otho, Bassus, Cæcina, Tigellinus, Lucanus, Petronius, Seneca, Corbulo, Burrus, Silius, Drusus, Pallas, and Narcissus; and those tragic women of the *Annals*—imperious, recklessly daring, beautiful or loyal—Livia, Messalina, Vipsania, the two Agrippinas, mothers of Caligula and of Nero, Urgulania, Sabina Poppœa, Epicharis, Lollia Paulina, Lepida, Calpurnia, Pontia, Servilia, and Acte!

Both his great works, the *Histories* and the *Annals*, read at moments like variations and developments of the same tragic theme, the "wrath of the gods against Rome," the *deûm ira in rem Romanam* of the *Annals*; whilst in the *Histories* the theory of retribution appears in the reflection, *non esse curae deis securitatem nostram, esse ultionem*, with which he closes his preliminary survey of the havoc and civil fury of the times of Galba—"Not our preservation, but their own vengeance, do the gods desire." It is as if, transported in imagination far into the future, Tacitus looked back and pronounced the judgment of Rome in a spirit not dissimilar from that of Saint Augustine. Yet the Rome of Trajan and of the Antonines, of Severus and of Aurelian, was to come, and, as if distrusting his rancour and the wounded pride of an oligarch, Tacitus betrays in other passages habits of thought and speculation of a widely different bearing. His sympathies with the Stoic sect were instinctive, but in his reserve and deep reticence he resembles, not Seneca, but Machiavelli or Thucydides.

A passage in the *Annals* may fitly represent

the impression of reserve which these three mighty spirits, Tacitus, Thucydides, and Machiavelli, at moments convey. "Sed mihi haec ac talia audienti in incerto judicium est, fatone res mortalium et necessitate immutabili an forte volvantur; quippe sapientissimos veterum, quique sectam eorum aemulantur, diversos reperias, ac multis insitam opinionem non initia nostri, non finem, non denique homines dis curae; ideo creberrime tristia in bonos, laeta apud deteriores esse; contra alii fatum quidem congruere rebus putant, sed non e vagis stellis, verum apud principia et nexus naturalium causarum; ac tamen electionem vitae nobis relinquunt, quam ubi elegeris, certum imminentium ordinem; neque mala vel bona quae vulgus putet."[6]

[6] In Richard Greneway's translation, London, 1598, one of the earliest renderings of Tacitus into English, this passage stands as follows:—

"When I heare of these and the like things, I can give no certaine judgement, whether the affaires of mortall men are governed by fate and immutable necessitie; or have their course and change by chaunce and fortune. For thou shalt finde, that as well those which were accounted wise in auncient times, as such as were imitators of their sect, do varie and disagree therein; some do resolutlie beleeve that the gods have no care of man's beginning or ending; no, not of man at all. Whereof it proceedeth that the vertuous are tossed and afflicted with so many miseries; and the vitious (vicious) and bad triumphe with so great prosperities. Contrarilie, others are of opinion that fate and destinie may well stand with the course of our actions:

And yet the theory of retribution had not been without its influence upon Thucydides. It even forces the structure of his later books into the regularity of a tragedy, in which Athens is the protagonist, and a verse of Sophocles the theme. But his earlier and greater manner prevails, and from the study of his work the mind passes easily to the contemplation of the doom which awaited the destroyers of Athens, the monstrous tyrannies in Syracuse, and Lacedæmon's swift ruin.

Another phase of the position of Tacitus deserves attention. It was a habit of writers of the eighteenth century, in treating of the vicissitudes of empires, to state one problem and solve another. The question asked was, "Is there a law regulating the fall of empires?"; but the question answered, satisfactorily or unsatisfactorily, was, "Is there a remedy?" Like the elder Cato, Tacitus seems

yet nothing at all depend of the planets or stars, but proceede from a connexion of naturall causes as from their beginning. And these graunt withall, that we have free choise and election what life to follow; which being once chosen, we are guided after, by a certain order of causes unto our end. Neither do they esteeme those things to be good or bad which the vulgar do so call."

Murphy's frequent looseness of phraseology, false elegance, and futile commentary, are nowhere more conspicuous than in his version of the sixth book of the *Annals* and of this paragraph in particular.

in places to refer the ruin which he anticipated to Rome's departure from the austerity and simplicity of the early centuries. In the luxury of the Cæsars he discerns but another condemnation of the policy of Caius Julius.

The use which Gibbon has made of this argument is celebrated. In Gibbon's life, indeed, regret for the Empire, for the Rome of Trajan and of Marcus, exercises as strong a sway, artistically, as regret for the Republic exercises over the art and thought of Tacitus. Both desiderate a world which is not now, musing with fierce bitterness or cold resignation upon that which was once but is no longer. Both ponder the question, "How could the disaster have been averted? How could the decline of Rome have been stayed?" Tacitus is the greater poet,—more penetrating in vision, a greater master of his medium, profounder in his insight into the human heart. But a common atmosphere of elegy pervades the work of both, and if Gibbon again and again forgets the inquiry with which he set out, the charm of his work gains thereby. A pensive melancholy akin to that of Petrarch's *Trionfi*, or the *Antiquités de Rome* of Joachim du Bellay,

redeems from monotony, by the emotion it communicates, the over-stately march of many a balanced period.[7] But it were as vain to seek in Tasso for a philosophic theory of the Crusades as seek in Gibbon a philosophic theory of the decline of empires.

His artistic purpose was strengthened to something like a prophetic purpose by the environment of his age, the incidents of his life, and the bent of his own intellect. He combats the same enemy as Voltaire waged truceless war upon,—the subtle, intangible, omnipresent spirit of insincerity, hypocrisy, and superstition, from which the bigotry and religious oppression of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries derived their power. And Gibbon's indebtedness to Voltaire is amazing. There is scarcely a living concep-

[7] Life, Love, Fame, and Death are themes of Petrarch's *Triumphs*. The same profound sense of the transiency of things, which meets us in the studied pages of his confessional—the Latin treatise *De Contemptu Mundi*—pervades these exquisite poems. Du Bellay's *Antiquities*, which Spenser's translation under the title of *The Ruines of Rome* has made familiar, were written after a visit to Rome in attendance upon the Cardinal du Bellay, and first published in 1558. The beautiful *Songe sur Rome* accompanied them. Two years later Du Bellay, then in his thirty-fifth or thirty-sixth year, died. The preciousness of these poems is enhanced rather than diminished if we imagine that the friend of Ronsard endeavoured to wed the music of Villon's *Ballades* to the passing of empires and of Rome.

tion in the *Decline and Fall* which cannot be traced to that nimble, varied, and all-illuminating spirit. Even the ironic method of the two renowned chapters was prompted by a section in the *Essai sur les Mœurs*.

Thus to the theory of Tacitus, the departure from the ancient simplicity of life, Gibbon adds the theory of Zosimus.[8] With Zosimus he affirms that the triumph of Christianism sealed the fate of Rome, and in the Emperor Julian Gibbon finds the same heroic but ill-starred defender of the past, as Tacitus found in the unfortunate Germanicus. This conception informs Gibbon's work throughout, prompting alike the furtive, malignant, or tasteless sketches of the great Pontiffs and the great Cæsars, and the finish, the studied care, the vivid detail lavished upon the portraits of their enemies. Half-seriously, half-smiling at

[8] In the generation succeeding that of St. Augustine, the fall of Rome formed the subject of a work in six books by Zosimus, an official of high rank at Constantinople. The fifth and sixth books deal with the period between the death of Theodosius and the capture of the city by Alaric (395-410 A.D.) Zosimus ascribes the disaster to the revolution effected in the life and conduct of the Romans by the new religion. The tone of the whole history is evidently inspired by the brilliant but irregular works of the Syrian Eunapius whom hero-worship and the regret for a lost cause blinded to all save the imposing designs of the Emperor Julian.

his own enthusiasm, he seems to discern in Mohammed, in Saladin, and the Ottoman power, the avengers of Julian and the Rome of the Antonines.

And thus Ruskin, inspired by a mood of his great teacher, traces the decline of Venice to its abandonment of Christianism, and Gibbon, influenced by Voltaire and the environment of his age, traces the fall of Rome to the adoption of Christianism.

§ 5. WHAT IS MEANT BY THE "FALL OF AN EMPIRE"?

Underlying both these classes of theories, the retributive and the cyclic, and underlying much of the speculation both of the eighteenth and of the nineteenth century upon the subject, is the assumption that the decay of empires is accidental, or arises from causes that can be averted, or from the operation of forces that can be modified. The mediæval conception of one empire upon the earth, which yet shall endure forever in righteousness, influences even the mind of Gibbon. He had studied Polybius, and Rome's indefeasible right to the govern-

ment of the world was the faith which Polybius had announced. And in the hour of Judea's humiliation and ruin her prophets had still proclaimed a similar hope of everlasting dominion to Israel.

But, as the centuries advance, it grows ever clearer that regret or surprise at the passing of empires is like regret or surprise at the passing of youth. Man might as well start once more to discover the elixir of life and alchemy's secrets as hope to found an empire that shall not pass away.

To ponder too curiously the question why a State declines is like pondering too curiously the question why a man dies. In the vicissitudes of States we are on the threshold of the same Mystery as in the vicissitudes of nature and of human life. The tracts and regions governed by cause and effect are behind us. An empire, like a work of art, is an end in itself, but duration in the former is an integral portion or phase of that end. From the concept, "Empire," duration is inseparable, and the extent of that duration is involved in the concept itself. Duration and modes, religious or ethical, are alike determined from

within, from the divine thought realising itself through the individual in the State. The curve of an empire's history is directed by no self-existent, isolated causes. It is a portion of the universe, evading analysis as the beauty of a statue evades analysis, lost in the vastness of nature, in the labyrinths of the soul which created and of the soul which contemplates its perfection.

Therefore regret for the fall of an empire, unless, as in the works of a Gibbon or a Tacitus, it aids in transforming the present nearer to the heart's desire, is vain enough. The Eros of Praxiteles and the Athênê of Scopas, like the Cena of Leonardo and the Martyr of Titian, are beyond our reach, and with all our industry we shall hardly recover the ninety tragedies of Aeschylus. But the moment within the soul of the artist which these works enshrined, which by their inception and completion they did but strengthen and prolong, that moment of vision has not passed away. It has become part of the eternal, as the aspirations, fortitudes, heroisms, endurances, great aims which Rome or Hellas impersonates have become part of the eternal. Man

born into a world which was not made for him is perplexed, until in such moments the end for which he was himself fashioned is revealed. The artist, the hero, and the prophet give of their peace unto the world. Yet is this gift but a secondary thing, and subject to cause, and time, and change.

In the consummation of the life of a State the world-soul realises itself in a moment analogous to this moment in art. The form perishes, nation, city, empire; but the creative thought, the soul of the State, endures. As the marble or poem represents the supreme hour in the individual life, the ideal long pursued imaged there, perfect or imperfect, so the State represents the ideal pursued by the race. It is the embodiment in living immaterial substance of the creative purpose of the race, of the individual, and ultimately of the Divine. The State is immaterial; no visible form betrays it. Athênê or Roma are but the arbitrary emblems of an invisible, ever changing life, most subtle, most complex, yet indivisibly one, woven each day anew from myriads of aspirations, designs, ideals, recorded or unrecorded. Those heroic personalities, a Hildebrand, a Napoleon, a

Cromwell, a Richelieu, who usurp the attributes of the State, do but interpret the State to itself, rudely or faultlessly. Philip and Alexander, Baber and Akbar, are the men who respond to, who feel more profoundly than other men, the ideal, the impulse which beats at the heart of the race. The divine thought is in them more immanent than in other men. To Akbar the vision of the continent from Himalaya to either sea, all brought to the feet of Mohammed, of Islam, impersonated in himself, is an ethereal vision like that which leads Alexander eastward beyond the Tigris to spread far the name of Hellas. Akbar started as his grandfather had started, and Baber's faith was not less sincere.[9]

[9] Baber's own memoirs, *Memoirs of Zehir-ed-din Muhammed Baber, emperor of Hindustan*, one of the priceless documents of history, show the manner in which he conceived his mission. Here is his account of the supreme incident in his spiritual life :—"In January, 1527, messengers came from Mehdi Khwajeh to announce that Sanka, the Rana of Mewar, and Hassan Khan Mewati, were on their march from the west. On 11th February I went forth to the Holy War. On the 25th I mounted to survey my posts, and during the ride I was struck with the reflection that I had always resolved to make an effectual repentance at some period of my life. I now spoke with myself thus—'O my soul, how long wilt thou continue to take pleasure in sin? Not bitter is repentance: then taste it thou! Since the day wherein thou didst set forth on a Holy War, thou hast seen Death before thine eyes for thy salvation. And he who sacrificeth his life to save his soul shall attain that exalted state thou wottest of.' Then I sent for the gold and the silver goblets, and broke them, and drank wine no more, and purified my

But the contact with other races and other creeds diverted or heightened this first purpose of the Mongol, and at the pinnacle of earthly power, Akbar met and yielded to the temptation, which dazzled for a moment even the steady gaze of Napoleon. Apprehending the unity beneath the diversity of the religions of his various subjects, Hindoo, Persian, Mohammedan, Christian, Akbar dared the lofty enterprise and essayed to extract the common truth of all, selecting, as Julian had done, twelve centuries before him, the sun as the symbol of universal beneficence, and truth, and life. He failed, but failed greatly.

The distinctions of a great State, art, action, empire, supremacy in thought, supremacy in deed, supremacy in conception of the ideal of humanity, like rays emanating from the same divine centre, thither converge again. Any attempt to explain their succession and decay in terms of a mechanical law must thus lead either to the reserve of Machiavelli, to the

heart. And having thus heard from the Voice that errs not, the tidings of peace, and being now for the first time a Mussulman indeed, I commanded that the Holy War shall begin with the grand war against the evil in our hearts." Such was the mood in which, on the 24th of the first Jemadi, A.H. 933, Baber proceeded to found the Mogul Empire.

outworn fantasies of Bossuet, or to such formulas as those of Ruskin and Gibbon, in which synchronous phenomena are woven into a chain of causes and effects.

Even in the sphere of individual existence death is but a mode of human thought, a name which has no counterpart in the frame of things. As life is but a mode of the divine thought, so death is but a mode of human thought, a creation of the intellect the more vividly to realise itself and life. "Man," it has been said, "is the inventor of Nothingness. Nature and the Universe know it not." The past wields over the present a power which could never be derived from Death and Nothingness. No age, as was pointed out in the first lecture, has felt this power so intimately as the present. As if we had a thousand lives to live, we consume the present in the study of the past, and sink from sight ourselves while still contemplating the scenes designed for other eyes. Even our most living impulses we interpret as if they were sacred runes carved by long-vanished hands, so that it seems as if the dead alone lived, and the living alone were dead.

But the soul unifies all things, and is then

most in the present when most deeply absorbed in the past. The soul of man is the true Logos of the universe. It is the contemporary of all the ages, and to none of the æons is it a stranger. It heard the informing voice which instructed the planets in their paths, which moulded the rocks, the bones of the earth, and cast the sea and the far-stretched plains and the hills about them like a covering of flesh. Therefore time and death and nothingness are but shadows, which the intellect of man sets over against the substance which lives and is eternally.

And thus in the vicissitudes of States, even more impressively than elsewhere in the universal process of transformation which Nature is, the daring metaphor of the Hebrew, "As a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed," seems realised. The death of a State, the fall of an empire, are but phases in their history, by which a complete self-realisation is attained, or the perpetuation of their ideals under other forms, as Egypt in Hellas, Hellas in Rome, is secured.

In Portugal's short span of empire, her day of brief and troubled splendour, her monarchs

realise, even at the hazard of a temporary eclipse of the nation's independence, the aspirations of the race, which slowly arising, and growing in force and intensity, had become the fixed, tyrannous desire of a people, until, in Camoens' terse phrase of Manuel, "from that one great thought it never swerved." Another policy and other aims than those which her monarchs pursued—tolerance instead of fanaticism, prudence instead of heroism, national patriotism instead of imperial, homely common-sense instead of glorious wisdom—all or any of these might have warded off the doom of Portugal and of the house of Avis. But these things were not in the blood of Lusitania, nor would this have been the nation of Vasco da Gama and Camoens, of Alboquerque and Cabral. It is as vain to seek in depopulation for the *causes* of the fall of Portugal as in the Inquisition or the Papal power. Even Buckle, that mighty statistician, would hardly risk the determining of the ratio which may not be overstepped between the bounds of an empire and the extent of the nation which creates it. If her yeomen forsook the fields and left the soil of Portugal untilled, if her chivalry forsook their

estates, the question confronts us, What is the character, the heart of a race which acts in this manner? What is the ideal powerful enough to make the hazard of a nation's death preferable to the abandonment of that ideal? The nation which sent its bravest to die at Al-Kasr al Kebir[10] is not a nation of adventurers. Nor do the instances of Phocæa, of the Cimbri, or the Ostrogoths afford any analogy here. Dom Sebastian's device fits not only his own career but the history of the race of which at that epoch he was at once the king and the ideal hero—"A glorious death makes the whole life glorious." And the genius of the nation sanctioned his life and his heroic death. To Portugal Dom Sebastian became such a figure as Frederick Barbarossa, dead on the far-off crusade, had been to the Middle Age, and for two centuries, whenever night thickened around the fortunes of the race, the spirit of Dom Sebastian returned to illumine the gloom, showing himself to a few faithful ones; and in

[10] The battle of Al-Kasr al Kebir, in Morocco, about fifty miles south of Tangiers, was fought on 4th August 1578. The king, Dom Sebastian, and the flower of the Portuguese nobility died on the field. As in Scotland after Flodden, there was not a house of name in Portugal which had not its dead to mourn.

very truth the spirit of his deeds and of their fathers never died in the hearts of the Portuguese, inspiring whatever is memorable in their later history.

Spain completes in the expulsion of the Moors the warfare, the Crusade, which began with Pelayo and the remnant of the Visigoths. Spain, as Spain, could not act otherwise, could not act as Germany acted, as England acted. Venice, so far from abandoning the faith of the Nazarene, as Ruskin fancied, barred of her commerce, seeing her power pass to Portugal, did yet, solitary and unaided, face the Ottoman, and for two generations made the Crusades live again. It is another Venice, yet religion is not the cause of that otherness. She defies Paul V. in the name of freedom, in the days of Sarpi,[11]

[11] The genius of this great thinker, patriot, scholar, and historian, along with the heroism of the war of Candia, "the longest and most memorable siege on record," as Voltaire designates it, throw a dying lustre over the Venice of the seventeenth century, which in painting has then but such names as those of Podovanino and the younger Cagliari. Sarpi's defence of Venice against Paul V., an attorney in the seat of Hildebrand, occurred in 1605. It consists of two works—the *Tractate* and the *Considerations*—and probably of a third drawn up for the secret use of the Council of Ten. Like Voltaire, Sarpi seems to have lived with a pen in his hand. His manuscripts in the Venice archives fill twenty-nine folio volumes. The first collected edition of his works was published, not unfitly, in the year of the fall of the Bastille.

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as she had defied Innocent III. in the name of empire in the days of Dandolo.

Hellas still lives, still forms an element, vitalising and omnipresent, in the life of States and in human destiny. Roman grandeur is not dead whilst Sulla, Tacitus, Montesquieu, Machiavelli survive. To Petrarch the Rome of the Scipios is more present than the Rome of the Colonnas, and it numbers among its citizens Byron, Goethe, and Leopardi.

For like all great empires Rome strove not for herself but for humanity, and dying, had yet strength, by her laws, her religion, her language, to impart her spirit and the secret of her peace to other races and to other times. In the world's *palæstra* she had thrown the *discus* to a point which the empires that come after, dowered as Rome was dowered, and by kindred ideals fired, must struggle to surpass, or in this divine antagonism be broken.

For what does the fall of Rome mean, and what are its relations to this Empire of Britain? In an earlier lecture I illustrated my conception of the Rome of the fifth century in the similitude of a Goth bending over a dead Roman, and by the flare of a torch seeking to read on

the still brow the secret of his own destiny. Rome does not die there. Her genius lives on in the Gothic race, deep, penetrating, and all-informing, and in the picked valour of that race, which for six hundred years spends itself in forging England, it is deepest, most penetrating, and all-informing. Roman definiteness of thought and act were in that nation touched by mysticism to reverie and compassion. From the ashes of the dead ideal of concrete justice, imaginative justice is born. Right becomes righteousness, but the living genius which was Rome still pulses within it. By the energy of feudalism the ancient subjection of the individual to the State is challenged. Freedom is born, but like some winged glory hovering aloft, rivets the famished eyes of men, till at last, descending by the Rhine, it fills with its radiance a darkened world. Religious oppression is stayed, but, Phœnix-like, yet another ideal arises, and generations later, what a temple is reared for it by the Seine! And now in this era, and at this latest time, behold in England the glory has once more alighted, as once for a brief space by the Rhine and Seine, but surely to make here its lasting

mansionry. For in very truth, in all that freedom and all that justice possess of power towards good amongst men, is not England as it were earth's central shrine and this race the vanguard of humanity?

Rome was the synthesis of the empires of the past, of Hellas, of Egypt, of Assyria. In her purposes their purposes lived. Mediæval imperialism strove not to rival Rome but to be Rome. In Britain the spirit of Empire receives a new incarnation. The form decays, the divine idea remains, the creative spirit gliding from this to that, indestructible. And thus the destiny of empires involves the consideration of the destiny of man.

LECTURE VII

THE DESTINY OF IMPERIAL BRITAIN AND THE DESTINY OF MAN

[Tuesday, 10th July 1900.]

THOUGH life itself and all its modes are transient, but shadows cast through the richly-tinted veil of Maya upon the everlasting deep of things, yet such dreams as those of perpetual peace and of empires exempt from degeneration and decay, like the illusion of perpetual happiness, the prayer of Spinoza for some one "supreme, continuous, unending bliss," have mocked man from the beginning of recorded history to the present hour. They are ancient as the rocks and their musings from eternity, inextinguishable as the *élan* of the soul imprisoned in time towards that which is beyond time.

And yet the effect of these, as of all false

illusions, is but to render the value of Reality—I had almost said of the real Illusion—more poignant. Indeed, "false" and "unreal" at all times are mere designations we apply to the hours of dim and uncertain vision when tested by the standard which the moments of perfect insight afford.

Nothing is more tedious, yet nothing is more instructive, than the study of the formulated ideals, the imagings of what life might be or life ought to be, of poets or systematic philosophers. Nothing so instantly reconciles us to war as the delineations of humanity under "meek-eyed Peace"; and to the passing of visible things, empires, states, arts, laws, and this universal frame of things, as such attempts as have been made to stay time and change, and abrogate the ordinances of the world.

Was machst du an der Welt? sie ist schon gemacht.
Why shapest thou the world? 'twas shapen long ago.[1]

Nor does this result in the mood of Candide. The effort unconquered and unending to behold

[1] Was machst du an der Welt? sie ist schon gemacht;
Der Herr der Schöpfung hat alles bedacht.
Dein Loos ist gefallen, verfolge die Weise,
Der Weg ist begonnen, vollende die Reise.
GOETHE, *West-östlicher Divan*, *Buch der Sprüche*.

the visible and the passing, as in very truth it is, leads to a deeper vision of the Unseen and of the Eternal, as in very truth *it* is.

Thus we are prepared to consider the following question. Given that death is nothing, and the decline of empires but a change of form, will this empire of Imperial Britain also decline and fall? Will the form it now enshrines pass away, as the forms of Persia, Rome, the Empire of Akbar, have passed away? The question resolves itself into two parts—in what does the youth of a race or of an empire consist? And, secondly, is it possible by any analogy from the past to measure or gauge the possible or probable duration of Imperial Britain, to determine to what era, say in the history of such an empire as Rome or Islam, the present era in the history of Imperial Britain corresponds?

§ I. THE PRESENT STAGE IN THE HISTORY OF IMPERIAL BRITAIN

First of all with regard to the former question. Recent studies in ethnology have made it clear that youth, and all that this term implies of latent or realised energies, mental,

physical, intellectual, are not the inevitable attribute and exclusive possession of uncivilised or of recently civilised races. Yet this assumption still underlies much of the current speculation on the subject. Last century it was received as an axiomatic truth. Thus in the time of Louis XV., when a romantic interest first invested the American Indians, French writers saw in them the prototypes of the Germans described by Tacitus. Not only Voltaire and Rousseau, but Montesquieu himself, regard them curiously, as if in the backwoods dwelt the future dominators of the world. Comparisons were drawn between their manners, their religion, their customs, and those of the Goths and the Franks, and *littérateurs* indulged the fancy that in delineating the Hurons of the Mississippi they were preparing for posterity a literary surprise and a document lasting as the *Germania*. Such comparisons are still at times made, but they are like the comparison between a rising and a receding tide, both trace the same line along the sands, but it is the same tide only in appearance. It is the contrast between the simplicity of childhood and of senility, between the simplicity of a race dowered with many-sided

genius and of a race dowered with but one-sided genius. It is neither in the absence of civilisation, nor in its newness, that the youth of a race consists; nor does the old age of a race consist in refinement, nor capacity for the arts necessarily imply decline of political energy. The victories of the Germans in 1870 were like Fate's ironic comment upon the inferences drawn from their love of philosophy. Abstract thought had not unfitted the race for war, nor "Wertherism" for the battlefield.

But, as in the life of the individual, so in the life of a race, youth consists in capacity for enthusiasm for a great ideal, capacity to frame, resolution to pursue, devotion to sacrifice all to a great political end. Russia, for instance, has only recently come within the influence of European culture, but this does not make the Slav a youthful race. The Slavonic is indeed perhaps the oldest people in Europe. Its literature, its art, its music, the characteristics of its society alike attest this. Superstition is not youth, else we might look to the hut of the Samoyede even with more confidence than to the cabin of the Moujik, for the imperial race of the future. And prolificness in a race does as

surely denote resignation to be governed, as the genius to govern others.

And the Slav, as we have seen, has at no period of his history shown that "youth" which consists in capacity for a great political ideal, either in Poland, or amongst the Czechs, or in Russia.

The present German empire assuredly exhibits in nothing the qualities of ancient lineage; yet the race which composes it, is the same race as was once united under Hapsburg, under Luxemburg, under Hohenstauffen, and under Franconian, as now under the Hohenzollern dynasty.

The United States as a nation bear the same relation to Britain as the Moorish kingdom in Spain bore to the Saracenic empire of Bagdad. It is a fragment, a colossal fragment torn from the central mass; but not only in its language, its literature, its religion and its laws, but in individual and national peculiarities, at least in the deeper moments of history and of life, the original stock asserts itself. The State is young; but the race is precisely of the same remoteness as Britain and the Greater Britain.

Passing to the second point,—at what epoch do we now stand as compared with Rome or Islam? It is not unusual to speak of Britain as an aged empire, but such estimates or descriptions commonly rest upon a misapprehension, first, of the period in which the Nation of England strictly speaking arises, and secondly, of the period in which the Empire of Britain arises.

The traditional date of the landing of Hengist does not indicate a moment analogous to the moment in the history of Rome marked by the traditional date of the foundation of the city. The date 776 B.C. marks the close of a process of transformation and slow evolving unity extending over centuries, so that the era of Romulus and the early kings, Numa, Ancus, and Servius, may be regarded as an epoch in Rome's history analogous to the period in England's history between Senlac and the constitutional struggle of the thirteenth century. The former is the period in which the civic unity of Rome is completed. The latter is the period in which the national unity of England is completed. Rome is now finally conscious to itself of its career as a city, *urbs Roma*, as England in the twelfth and thirteenth

centuries is finally conscious to itself of its career as a nation. Magna Carta and the constitutional struggle which followed may be said to determine the course of the national and political life of England as much as the Servian Code founded the civic unity and determined the character of the constitutional life of Rome.

And, as was pointed out in an earlier lecture, already in Rome and in England there are premonitions, foreshadowings of the future. The design of the city on the seven hills is the design of the eternal city, and the devotion of the *gens Fabia* announces the Roman legion. And in those wars of Creçy and Poitiers, the constancy, the dauntless heart, and the steady hand of the English archers, which broke the chivalry of France, what is it but the constancy of Waterloo, the squares, the charge, the Duke's words, spoken quietly as the words of fate, decreeing an empire's fall, "Stand up, Guards!"? And in 1381, the tramp of the feet of the hurrying peasants, sons and grandsons of the archers of Creçy, in the great Revolt, indignant at ingratitude and wrong, what is it but the prelude to the supremacy of

the People of England, to the Petition of Right, to Cromwell's Ironsides, to Chartism and Reform Acts, and the Democracy, self-governing, imperial and warlike of the present hour? So that even as a nation, about eighteen generations may be said to sum England's life, whilst, as we have seen, Britain's conscious life as an empire extends backwards but to three generations or to four. Thus if the question were asked, With what period in the history of Rome does the present age correspond? I should say, roughly speaking, it corresponds with the period of Titus and Vespasian, when Rome has still a course of three hundred years to run; and in the history of Islam, with the period of the early Abbassides, when the fall of the Saracenic dominion is still some four centuries removed.

Does this justify us in inferring that the course which England has to run will extend still over three centuries, and that then England too will pass away, as Rome, as the Saracenic empire, have passed away? So far as the determination of the eras in our history which correspond in development to eras in the history of Rome or of Islam is concerned, the

inference from analogy possesses a certain validity. And the accidental or fixed resemblances between the empires of Islam,[2] Rome, and Imperial Britain are numerous and striking enough to render such comparisons of real significance to speculative politics. But the similarity in structural expansion or in environment which can be traced throughout the completed dramas of Rome and Islam is to be found only in the initial stages of Imperial Britain. Then the argument from analogy fails, and our judgment is at a stand.

Assuming that each imperial race starts its career dowered with a vital capacity of definite range, and allowing for the necessary divergences in their course between a civic and a national state, Imperial Britain, regarded from its past, may be said in the present era to have reached a stage represented by the era of Vespasian and Titus, but to proceed further is perilous, so momentous is the distinction that

[2] Recent investigation has made it clear that the history of Islamic Arabia is not severed by any violent convulsion from pre-Mohammedan Arabia. "The times of ignorance" were not the desolate waste which Tabari, "the Livy of the Arabs," paints, and down to the close of the eighteenth century the comparison between England, Rome, and Islam, offers a fair field for speculative politics.

now arises between the circumstances of the two empires. During the present century the vast transformations which have been effected by science in the surroundings of man's physical life make all speculation upon the duration of Imperial Britain by analogies drawn from the duration either of Rome or of other empires, indecisive or rash.

The growth of the idea of freedom, and the modern interpretation of that idea in the spirit of Condorcet, have, within the bounds of the English nation itself, increased the intercourse between ranks to a degree unparalleled in the ancient world. The self-recuperative powers of the race have been strengthened by the course of its political and religious history. Fresh blood adds new energy to effete stocks. The effect of this restorative power from within is heightened in manifold ways by such a circumstance as the enormous facilities of locomotion which have arisen during the past two generations.

In the age of the first conscious beginnings of Imperial Britain, the communication between the regions of the empire was as difficult as in the Rome of Sulla; but the development of that consciousness has been synchronous, not only

with increased intercourse between the ranks of the same nation, but with increased intercourse between all the various climes of an empire upon which the sun never sets. From city to city, from town to town, from province to province, from colony to colony, emigration and immigration, change and interchange, of vast masses of the population are incessant. This increased inter-communication between the various members of the race, the influences of the change of climate upon the individual, aided by such imperceptible but many-sided forces as spring from the diffusion of knowledge and culture, mark a revolution in the vital resources and the environment in the British, as distinguished from the Saracenic or Roman race, so extra-ordinary that all analogy beyond the point which we have indicated is impossible, or so guarded by intricate hypotheses as to be use-less or misleading.

Nature seems pondering some vast and new experiment, and an empire has arisen whose future course, whether we consider its political or its economic, its physical or its mental resources, leaves conjecture behind. The world-stage is set as for the opening of a

drama which, at least in the magnitude of its incidents and the imposing circumstance of its action, will make the former achievements of men dwindle and seem of little account.

§ 2. THE DESTINY OF MAN

At this point we may fitly close our survey, and these "Reflections," by endeavouring to determine, not the remote future of Imperial Britain, but its immediate task, Fate's mandate to the present, and as we have considered Imperial Britain in its relations to the destiny of past empires, pause for a moment in conclusion upon its relations to the destiny of man.

To the ancient world, man in his march across the deserts of Time had left felicity and the golden age far behind him, and Rousseau's vision of Humanity as starting upon a wrong track, and drifting ever farther from the path of its peace, had charmed the melancholy or the despair of Virgil and his great master in verse and speculation, Titus Lucretius.

This conception of man's destiny as an infinite retrogression, Eden receding behind

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Eden, lost Paradise behind lost Paradise, in the dateless past, encounters us, now as a myth, now as a religious or philosophic tenet, throughout the earlier history of humanity from the Baltic to the Indian Sea, from the furthest Orient to the Western Isles. Beside this radiant past even the vision of the abode which awaits the soul at death seems dusky and repellant, a land of twilight, as in the Etruscan legend, or that dominion over the shades which Achilles loathed beyond any mortal misery.

But the memory or the imagination of this land far behind, upon which Heaven's light for ever falls, the Asgard of the Goths, the Akkadian dream of Sin-land ruled by the Yellow Emperor, the reign of Saturn and of Ops, diminishes in power and living energy as the ages advance, and, perishing at last, is embalmed in the cold and crystal loveliness of poetry. In its place bright mansions, elysian groves, await the soul at death. Heaven closes around earth like a protecting smile, and from this hope of a recovered Paradise and new Edens amongst the stars, which to Dante and his time are but the earth's appanage, man

advances swiftly to the desire, the hope, the certainty of a terrestrial Paradise waiting his race in the near or remote future. Thus, as the immanence of the Divine within the soul of man has deepened, and the desire of his heart has grown nearer the desire of the world-soul, so has the power of memory decreased and been transformed into hope. Man, tossed from illusion to illusion, has grown sensitive to the least intimations of Reality.

But these visions of Eden, whether located in a remote past, or in the interstellar spaces, or in the near future, have certain characteristics in common. From far behind to far in front the dream has shifted, as if the Northern Lights had moved from horizon to horizon, but it remains one dream. The earthly Paradise of the social reformer, a Saint-Simon or a Fourier, of a world free from war and devoted to agriculture and commerce, or of the philosophic evolutionist, of a world peopled by myriads of happy altruists bounding from bath to breakfast-room, illumined and illumining by their healthy and mutual smiles, differs from the earlier fancies of Asgard and the Isles of the Blest, not in heightened nobility and reasonableness, but in

diminished beauty and poetry. The dream of unending progress is vain as the dream of unending regress.

Critics of literature and philosophy have often remarked how sterile are the efforts to delineate a state of perfect and long-continued bliss, even when a Dante or a Milton undertakes the task, compared with delineations of torment and endless woe. And Aeschylus has remarked, and La Rochefoucauld and Helvétius bear him out, how much easier a man finds the effort to sympathise with another's misery than to rejoice in his joy.

Such contrasts are due, not to a faltering imagination, nor to the depravity of the human heart. They are the recognition by the dark Unconscious, which in sincerity of vision ever transcends the Conscious, that in man's life truth dwells not with felicity, that to the soul imprisoned in Time and Space, whether amongst the stars or on this earth, perfect peace is a mockery. But in Time, misery is the soul's familiar, anguish is the gate of truth, and the highest moments of bliss are, as the Socrates of Plato affirms, negative. They are the moments of oblivion, when the

manacles of Time fall off, whether from stress of agony or delight or mere weariness. Therefore with stammering lips man congratulates joy, but the response of grief to grief is quick and from the heart, sanctioned by the Unconscious; therefore in the portraiture of Heaven art fails, but in that of Hell succeeds.

It is not in time that the eternal can find rest, nor in space that the infinite can find repose, and as illusion follows lost illusion, the soul of man does but the more completely realise the wonder ineffable of the only reality, the Eternal Now.

§ 3. THE FOUR PERIODS OF MODERN HISTORY AND THEIR IDEALS

The deepening of this conception of man's destiny as beginning in the Infinite and in the Infinite ending, is one of the profoundest and most significant features of the present age. Its dominion over art, literature, religion, can no longer escape us. It is the dominant note of the last of the four great ages or epochs into which the history of the thought of modern Europe, in an ever-ascending scale, divides

itself. A brief review of these four epochs will best prepare us for a consideration of the present position of Britain, and of the relations of its empire to the actual conditions of Europe and humanity.

The First Age is controlled by the Saintly Ideal. The European of that age is a visionary. The unseen world is to him more real than the seen, and art and poetry exist but to decorate the pilgrimage of the soul from earth to heaven. The New Jerusalem which Tertullian saw night by night descend in the sunset; the city of God, whose shining battlements Saint Augustine beheld gleam through the smoke of the world-conflagration of the era of Alaric and Attila, of Vandal and Goth, Frank and Hun; the Day of Wrath and Judgment which later times looked forward to as certainly as to the coming of spring, are but phases of one pervading aspiration, one passioning cry of the soul.

But the illusion which lures on that age fades when the ascetic zeal of the saint is frustrated by the joy of life, and the crusader's valour is broken on the Moslem lances, and the scholastic's indefatigable pursuit of a harmonising, a reconciling word of reason and

of faith, his ardour not less lofty than the crusader's to pierce the ever-thickening host of doubts, discords, fears, fall all in ruins, in accepted defeat or in formulated despair.

With the Second Age a new illusion arises, the *Wahn* of religious freedom. The ideal which Rome taught the world, upon which saint, crusader, and scholar built their hopes, turned to ashes—but shall not the human soul find the haven of its rest in freedom from Rome, in the pure faith of primitive times? When the last of the scholastics was being silenced by a papal edict and the consciousness of a hopeless task, the first of the new scholars was ushering in the world-drama of four centuries.

The world-historic significance of the Reformation lies in the effort of the European mind to pierce, at least in the sphere of Religion, nearer to the truth. The successive phases of this struggle may be compared to a vast tetralogy, with a Prelude of which the actors and setting are Huss and Jerome, the Council of Constance and Sigismund, the traitor of traitors, who gave John Huss "the word of a king," and Huss, solitary at the stake, when the flames wrapped him round, learned the value of the

word of a king. Martin Luther is the protagonist of the first of the four great dramas that follow. Its theme is the consecration of man to sincerity in his relations to God. There, even at the hazard of death, the tongue shall utter what the heart thinks.

The second drama is named *Ignatius Loyola*; the theme is not less absorbing—"Art thou then so sure of the truth and of thy sincerity, O my brother?" Whatever his followers may have become, Don Inigo remains one of the most baffling enigmas that historical pyschology offers. From his grave he rules the Council, and the Tridentine Decrees are the acknowledgment of his unseen sovereignty.

What tragic shapes arise and crowd the stage of the third drama,—Thurn, Ferdinand, Tilly, Wallenstein, Richelieu, Gustavus, Condé, Oxenstiern! And when the last actors of the fourth drama, the conflict between moribund Jesuitism and Protestantism grown arrogant and prosperous, lay aside their masks in the world's great tiring-room of death, a new Age in world-history has begun.

As religious freedom is the *Wahn* of the Reformation drama, so it is in political freedom

that the Eternal Illusion now incarnates itself. Let man be free, let man throughout the earth attain the unfettered use of all his faculties, and heaven's light will once more fill all the dark places of the world! This is the new avatar, this the glad tidings which announce the French Revolution and the Third Age. Of this ideal, the faith in which the French Girondins die is the most perfect expression. What is this faith for which Condorcet and his party perish, some by poison, some by the sword, some by the guillotine, some in battle, but all by violent deaths—Vergniaud, Roland, Barbaroux, Brissot, Barnave, Gensonné, Pétion, Buzot, Isnard? "Oh Liberty, what crimes are done in thy name!" was not a reproach, but, in the gladness of the martyr's death which consecrated all the life, it was the wonder, the disquiet of a moment yet sure of its peace in some deeper reconcilement. Behold how strong is their faith! Marie Antoinette has her faith, the injunction of her priest, "When in doubt or in affliction, think of Calvary." Yet the hair of the Queen whitens, her spirit despairs. The Girondinist queen climbing the scaffold, not less a lover of love and of life than

Marie Antoinette—what nerves her? It is the star of the future and the memory of Vergniaud's phrase, "Posterity? What have we to do with posterity? Perish our memory, but let France be free!"

How free are their souls, what nobility shines in the eyes of these men, light-stepping to their doom, immortally serene, these martyrs, witnesses to an ideal not less pure, not less lofty than those other two for which saint and reformer died! And their battle-march, which is also their hymn of death, Shelley has composed it, the choral chant, the vision of the future of the world, which closes *Hellas*.

This faith in which the Girondins live and die is the hope, the faith that slowly arises in Europe through the eighteenth century, in political freedom as the regenerator, as the salvation of the world. Voltaire announces the coming of the Third Age,—"Blessed are the young, for their eyes shall behold it,"—and upon the ruins of the Bastille, Charles James Fox sees it arise. "By how much," he writes to a friend, "is not this the greatest event in the history of the world!" Its presence shakes the steadfast heart of Goethe

like a reed. Wordsworth, Schiller, Chateaubriand pledge themselves its hierophants—for a time! The *Wahn* of freedom, the eternal illusion, the dream of the human heart! First to France, then to Europe, then to all the earth—Freedom!

This is the faith for which the Girondins perish, and in dying bequeath to the nineteenth century the theory of man's destiny which informs its poetry, its speculative science, its systematic philosophy. It is the faith of Shelley and of Fichte, of Herbart and of Comte, of John Stuart Mill, Lassaulx, Quinet, not less than of Tennyson, last of the Girondins. For the ideal of the Third Age, freedom, knowledge, the federation of the world, passes as the ideals of the First and of the Second Age pass. Not in political any more than in religious freedom could man's unrest find a panacea. The new heavens and the new earth which Voltaire proclaimed vanished like the city which Tertullian saw beyond the sunset.

And knowledge,—of what avail is knowledge?—or to scan the abysses of space and search the depths of time? If the utmost

dreams of science, and all the moral and political aims of Girondinism were realised, if the foundations of life and of being were laid bare, if the curve of every star were traced, its laws determined, and its structure analysed, if the revolutions of this globe from its first hour, and the annals of all the systems that wheel in space, were by some miracle brought within our scrutiny,—it still would leave the spirit unsatisfied as when these crystal walls did first environ its infinitude.

The defects, the nobility, and the beauty of the ideal of the Third Age are conspicuous in the great last work of Condorcet. As Mirabeau, the intellectual Catiline of his age, is the protagonist of Rebellion, that principle which has drawn the deepest utterances from the world-soul, from Job to Prometheus and Farinata, so Condorcet, whose countenance in its high and gentle benevolence seems the very expression of that *bienfaisance* which the Abbé de Saint-Pierre made fashionable, may be styled the high-priest of Girondinism, and he carries his faith beyond the grave, hallowing the altar of Freedom with his blood. In over a hundred pamphlets during the four

years of his life as a Revolutionist, Condorcet disseminates his ideas,—fortnightly pamphlets, many of them even now worth reading, lighting up now this, now that aspect of his faith,—kingship, slavery, the destiny of man, two Houses, assignats, education of the people, finance, the rights of man, economics, free trade, the rights of women, the Progress of the Human Mind. It is in this last, written with the shadow of death upon him, that the central thought of his system is developed. He may have derived it from Turgot,[3] his master, and the subject of one of his noblest biographies, but he gave it a consecration of his own, and later writers have done little more than elaborate, vary, or reduce to scientific rule and line his living thought. Where they most are faithful, there his followers are greatest.

In the theory of evolution Condorcet's principles appear to find scientific expression

[3] Condorcet's biography (1786) of his master is one of the noblest works of its class in French literature. Turgot's was one of those minds that like Chamfort's or Villiers de L'Isle Adam's scatter bounteously the ideas which others use or misuse. The fogs and mists of Comte's portentous tomes are all derived, it has often been pointed out, from a few paragraphs of Turgot. And a fragment written by Turgot in his youth inspired something of the substance and even of the title of Condorcet's great *Esquisse*.

and warrant, but it is pathetic to observe the speculative science of a modern systematiser advancing through volume after volume with the cumbrous but massive force of a traction-engine, only to find rest at last in a vision of Utopia some centuries hence, tedious as the Paradise of mediæval poets or the fabulous Edens of earlier times.'

Indeed, the conception of the infinite perfectability of man, and of an eternal progress, carried its own doom in the familiar observation that there where progress can be traced, there the divine is least immanent. A distinguished statesman and writer, and a believer in evolution, recently avowed his perplexity that an age like the present, which has invented steam, electricity, and the kinematograph, should in painting and poetry not surpass the Renaissance, nor in sculpture the age of Phidias. In such perplexity is it not as if one heard again the threat of Mummius, charging his crew to give good heed to the statues of Praxiteles, on the peril of replacing them if broken!

Goethe, as the wrecks of his drama on Liberty prove, felt the might of the ideal of

the Third Age with all the vibrating emotion which genius imparts.[4] But he was the first to discover its hollowness, and bade the world, in epigram or in prose tale, in lyric or in drama, to seek its peace where he himself had found it, in Art. So the labour of the scientific theorist, negatively beneficent by the impulsion of man's spirit beyond science, brings also a reward of its own to the devotee. The sun of Art falls in a kind of twilight upon his soul, working obscurely in words, and then does he most know the Unknowable when, in the passion of self-imposed ignorance, he rises to a kind of eloquence in proclaiming its unknowableness. Glimmerings from the Eternal visit the obscure study where the soul in travail

[4] References to the power over his mind of the French Revolutionary principles abound in Goethe's writings. The violence of the first impression, which began with the affair of the necklace, had reached a climax in '90 and '91, and this, along with the ineffaceable memories of the *Werther* and *Gœtz* period, which his heart remembered when in his intellectual development he had left it far behind, accounts in a large measure for his yielding temporarily at least to the spell of Napoleon's genius, and for the studied but unaffected indifference to German politics and to the War of Liberation. Even of 1809, the year of Eckmühl, Essling, and Wagram, and the darkest hour of German freedom, Goethe can write — "This year, considering the beautiful returns it brought me, shall ever remain dear and precious to memory," and when the final uprising against the French was imminent, he sought quietude in oriental poetry—Firdusi, Hafiz, and Nisami.

records patiently the incidents of Time, and elaborates a theory of man's history as if it were framed to end like an Adelphi melodrama or a three-volume novel.

§ 4. THE IDEAL OF THE FOURTH AGE

But from these very failures, those dissatisfactions, the ideal of the Fourth Age is born, and the law of a greater progress divined. For the soul, revolting at last against the fleeting illusions of time, the deceiving Edens of saint, reformer, and revolutionist, freedom from the body, freedom from religious, or freedom from political oppression, sets steadily towards the lodestar of its being, whose rising is not in Time nor its going down in Space. Nor is it in knowledge, whether of the causes of things, or of the achievements of statesmen, warriors, legislators, that the peace of the infinite is to be found, but in a vision of that which was when Time and Cause were not. Then instruction and the massed treasures of knowledge, established or theoretic, concerning the past and the future of the planet on which man plays his part, or of other planets on which other forms

of being play their parts, do indeed dissolve and are rolled together like a scroll. The Timeless, the Infinite, like a burst of clear ether, an azure expanse washed of clouds, lures on the delighted spirit, tranced in ecstasy.

For the symbol of this universe and of man's destiny is not the prolongation of a line, nor of groups of lines organically co-ordinate, but, as it were, a sphere shapen from within and moulded by that Presence whose immanence, ever intensifying, is the Thought which time realises as the Deed. Man looks to the future and the coming of Eternity. How shall the Eternal come or the Infinite be far off? Behold, the Eternal is *now*, and the Infinite is *here*. And if the high-upreared architecture of the stars, and the changing fabric of the worlds, be but shadows, and the pageantry of time but a dream, yet the dreamer and the dream are God.

If all be Illusion, yet this faith that all *is* Illusion can be none. There the realm of Illusion ends, here Reality begins. And thus the spirit of man, having touched the mother-abyss, arises victorious in defeat to fix its gaze at last, steadfast and calm, upon the Eternal.

Such is the distinction of the Fourth Age, whose light is all about us, flooding in from the eastern windows yonder like a great dawn. Man's spirit, tutored by lost illusion after lost illusion, advances to an ever deeper reality. The race, too, like the individual and the nation, is subject to the Law of Tragedy. Once more, in the way of a thousand years, it knows that it is not in time, nor in any cunning manipulation or extension of the things of time, that Man the Timeless can find the word which sums his destiny, and spurning at the phantoms of space, save as they grant access to the Spaceless, casts itself back upon God, and in art, thought, and action pierces to the Infinite through the finite.

This mystic attribute, this *élan* of the soul, discovers a fellowship in thinkers wide apart in circumstance and mental environment. It is, for instance, the trait which Schopenhauer, Tourgenieff, Flaubert, and Carlyle possess in common.[5] These men are not as others of

[5] It is remarkable that Carlyle and Schopenhauer should have lived through four decades together yet neither know in any complete way of the other's work. Carlyle nowhere mentions the name of Schopenhauer. Indeed *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, though read by a few, was practically an unknown book both in Germany and England

their time, but prophet voices that announce the Fourth, the latest Age, whose dawn has laid its hand upon the eastern hills.

The restless imagination of Flaubert, fused from the blood of the Norsemen, plunges into one period after another, Carthage, the Rome of the Cæsars, Syria, Egypt, and Galilee, the unchanging East, and the monotony in change of the West, pursuing the one Vision in many forms, the Vision which leads on Carlyle from stage to stage of a course curiously similar. Flaubert has a wider range and more varied sympathies than Carlyle, and in intensity of vision occasionally surpasses him. Both are mystics, visionaries, from their youth; but in

until a date when Carlyle was growing old, solitary, and from the present ever more detached, and new books and new writers had become, as they were to Goethe in his age, distasteful or a weariness. Schopenhauer, on the other hand, already in the "thirties," had been attracted by Carlyle's essays on German literature in the *Edinburgh*, and though ignorant as yet of the writer's name he was all his life too diligent a reader of English newspapers and magazines to be unaware of Carlyle's later fame. But he has left no criticism, nor any distinct references to Carlyle's teaching, although in his later and miscellaneous writings the opportunity often presents itself. Wagner, it is known, was a student both of Schopenhauer and Carlyle. Schopenhauer's proud injunction, indeed, that he who would understand his writings should prepare himself by a preliminary study of Plato or Kant, or of the divine wisdom of the Upanishads, indicates also paths that lead to the higher teaching of Wagner, and — though in a less degree — of Carlyle.

ethics Flaubert seems to attain at a bound the point of view which the dragging years alone revealed to Carlyle.

The chapter on the death of Frederick the Great reads like a passage from the *Correspondance* of Flaubert in his first manhood. In Saint Antoine, Flaubert found the secret of the same mystic inspiration as Carlyle found in Cromwell. To the brooding soul of the hermit, as to that of the warrior of Jehovah, what is earth, what are the shapes of time? Man's path is to the Eternal—*dem Grabe hinan*—and from the study of the Revolution of 1848 Flaubert arises with the same embittered insight as marks the close of "Frederick the Great."

And if, in such later works as Flaubert's *Bouvard et Pécuchet* and the *Latter-Day Pamphlets* of Carlyle, only the difference between the two minds is apparent, the difference is, after all, but a difference in temperament. It is the contrast between the impassive aloofness of the artist, and the personal and intrusive vehemence of the prophet.

The structural thought, the essential emotion of the two works are the same—the

revolt of a soul whose impulses are ever beyond the finite and the transient, against a world immersed in the finite and the transient. Hence the derision, the bitter scorn, or the laughter with which they cover the pretensions, the hypocrisies, the loud claims of modern science and mechanical invention. But whether surveyed with contemplative calm, or proclaimed with passionate remonstrance to an unheeding generation, the life vision of these two men is one and the same—"the eternities, the immensities."[6]

And this same passion for the infinite is the informing thought of Wagner's tone-dramas and Tschaikowsky's symphonies. Love's

[6] The friendship of Tourgenieff and Flaubert rested upon speculative rather than on artistic sympathy. The Russian indeed never quite understood Flaubert's "rage for the word." Yet the deep inner concord of the two natures reveals itself in their correspondence. It was the supreme friendship of Flaubert's later manhood as that with Bouilhet was the friendship of his earlier years. Yet they met seldom, and their meetings often resembled those of Thoreau and Emerson, as described by the former, or those of Carlyle and Tennyson, when after some three hours' smoking, interrupted by a word or two, the evening would end with Carlyle's good-night: "Weel, we hae had a grand nicht, Alfred." It is in one of Tourgenieff's own prose-poems that the dialogue of the Jungfrau and the Finsteraarhorn across the centuries is darkly shadowed. The evening of the world falls upon spirits sensitive to its intimations like the diurnal twilight falling upon the hearts of travellers on a broad stream nearing the Ocean, and the haven of its unending rest.

mystery is deepened by the mystery of death, and its splendour has an added touch by the breath of the grave. The desire of the infinite greatens the beauty of the finite and lights its sanctuary with a supernatural radiance. All knowledge there becomes wonder. Truth is not *known*, but the soul is there in very deed possessed by the Truth, and is one with it eternally.

Ibsen's protest against limited horizons, against theorists, formulists, social codes, conventions, derives its justice from the worthlessness of those conventions, codes, theories, in the light of the infinite. The achievements in art most distinctive of the present age,—the paintings of Courbet, Whistler, Degas, for instance,—proclaim the same creative principle, the unsubstantiality of substance, the immateriality of matter, the mutability of all that seems most fixed, the unreality of all things, save that which was once the emblem of unreality, the play of line and colour, and their impression upon the retina of the eye. "If I live to be a hundred, I shall be able to draw a line," said Hokousai. It was as if he had said, "I shall be able to create a world."

The pressing effects of Imperialism in such an environment, its swift influences upon the life of an age thus conditioned, thus sharply defined from all preceding ages, are of an import which it would be hard to over-estimate. The nation undowered with such an ideal, menaced with extinction or with a gradual depression to the rank of a protected nationality, passes easily, as in France and Holland and in the higher grades of Russian society, to the side of political and commercial indifferentism, of artistic or literary cosmopolitanism.

But to a race dowered with the genius for empire, it rescues politics from the taint of local or transient designs, and imparts to public affairs and the things of State that elevation which was their characteristic in the Rome of Virgil and the England of Cromwell. For not only the life of the individual, but the life of States, is by this conception robed in something of its initial wonder. These, the individual and the State, as we have seen, are but separate phases, aspects of one thought, that thought which in the Universe is realised.

And the transformations in man's conception of his relations to the divine are in turn fraught

with consequence to the ideal of imperialism itself. Life is greatened. The ardour of the periods of history most memorable awakens again in man, the reverence of the Middle Age, the energy of the Renaissance. A higher mood than that of the England of Cromwell has arisen upon the England of to-day. Man's true peace is not in the finite, but in the infinite; yet in the finite there is a work to be done, with the high disregard of a race which looks, not to the judgment of men, but of angels, whose appeal is not to the opinion of the world, but of God.

Here at the close of a century, side by side existing are two ideals, one political, the other religious, "a divine philosophy of the mind," in Algernon Sidney's phrase—how can the issue and event be other than auspicious to this empire and to this generation of men? As Puritanism seemed born for the ideal of Constitutional England, so this ideal of the Fourth Epoch seems born to be the faith of Imperial England. Behind Cromwell's armies was the faith of Calvin, the philosophy of the "Institutes"; behind the French Revolution the thought of Rousseau and Voltaire; but in this

ideal, a thought, a speculative vision, deeper, wider in range than Calvin's or Rousseau's, is with every hour that passes, adding a serener life, an energy more profound.

§ 5. THE "ACT" AND THE "THOUGHT"

Carlyle's exaltation of the "deed" above the "word," of action above speech, does not exhaust its meaning in setting the man of deeds, the soldier or the politician, above the thinker or the artist. It is an affirmation of the glory of the sole Actor, the Dramatist of the World, the *Demiourgos*, whose actions are at once the deeds and the thoughts of men. "Im Anfang war die That." The "deed" is nearer the eternal fountain than the "word"; though, on the other hand, in this or that work of art there may converge more rays from the primal source than in this or that deed. In painting, that impressionism which loves the line for the line's sake, the tint for the tint's sake, owes its emotion, sincere or affected, to the same energy of the same divine thought as that from which the baser enthusiasm of the subject-painter flows. A consciousness of the same truth reveals itself

in Wagner's lifelong struggle, splendidly heroic, to weld the art of arts into living, pulsing union with the "deed," the action and its setting, from which, in such a work as *Tristan*, or as *Parsifal*, that art's ecstasy or mystery derives.

In the great crises of the world the preliminary actions have always been indefinite, hesitating, or obscure. Indefiniteness is far from proving the insincerity or transiency of Imperialism as an ideal. "A man," says Oliver Cromwell, "never goes so far as when he does not know whither he is going." What Cromwell meant was that, in the great hours of life, the supernatural, the illimitable, thrusts itself between man and the limited, precise ends of common days. Upon such a subject Cromwell has the right to speak. Great himself, he was the cause of the greatness that was in others. But in all things it was still Jehovah that worked in him. Deeply penetrated with this belief, Cromwell had the gift of making his armies live his life, think his thought. Each soldier, horse or foot, was a warrior of God.

Man's severing, isolating intelligence is in

these moments merged in the divine intelligence; but in subjection, then is it most free. The conscious is lost in the unconscious force which works behind the world. The individual will stands aside. The Will of the universe advances. Precision of design and purpose are shrouded in that dark background of Greek tragedy, on which the forms of gods and heroes, in mortal or immortal beauty, were sketched, subject in all their doings to this high, dread, and austere power.

So of empires, of races, and of nations. A race never goes so far as when it knows not whither it is going, when, rising in the consciousness of its destiny at last, and seeing as yet but a little way in front, it advances, performs that task as if it were its final task, as if no other task was reserved for it by time or by nature. Consciousness of destiny is the consciousness of the will of God and of the divine purposes. It is the identity of the desire of the race with the desire of the world-soul, and it moves towards its goal with the motion of tides and of planets.

Therefore when in thought we summon up

remembrance of those empires of the past, Assyria, Egypt, Babylon, Hellas, Rome, and Islam, or those empires of nearer times, Charles's, Napoleon's, Akbar's, when we throw ourselves back in imagination across the night of time, endeavouring to live through their revolutions, and front with each in turn the black portals of the future—what image is this which of itself starts within the mind? Is it not the procession of the gladiators and the amphitheatre of Rome?

Rome beyond all races had the instinct of tragic grandeur in state and public life, and by that instinct even her cruelty is at times elevated through the pageantry or impressive circumstance amid which it is enacted. Does not this vault then, arching above us, appear but as a vast amphitheatre? And towards the mortal arena the empires of the world, one by one, defile past the high-upreared, dark, and awful throne where sits Destiny,—the phalanx of Macedon, the Roman legion, the black banner of the Abbassides, the jewelled mail of Akbar's chivalry, and the Ottoman's crescent moon. And their resolution, serene, implacable, sublime, is the resolution of the gladiators, "*Ave, im-*

perator, morituri te salutant! Hail, Cæsar, those about to die salute thee!"

And when the vision sinks, dissolving, and night has once more within its keeping cuirass and spear and the caparisons of war, the oppressed mind is beset as by a heavy sound, gathering up from the abysses, deeper, more dread and mysterious than the death-march of heroes—the funeral march of the empires of the world, the requiem of faiths, dead yet not dead, of creeds, institutions, religions, governments, laws—till through Time's shadows the Eternal breaks, in silence sweeter than all music, in a darkness beyond all light.

§ 6. BRITAIN'S WORLD-MISSION: THE WITNESS OF THE DEAD TO THE MANDATE OF THE PRESENT

Yet with a resolution as deep-hearted as the gladiator's, it is for another cause and unto other ends that the empires of the world have striven, fulfilled their destiny and disappeared, that this Empire of Britain now strives, fulfilling its destiny. Fixed in her resolve, the will of God behind her, whither is her immediate

course? The narrow space of the path in front of her that is discernible even dimly—whither does it tend or appear to tend?

Empires are successive incarnations of the Divine ideas, and by a principle which, in its universality and omnipotence in the frame of Nature, seems itself an attribute of the Divine, the principle of conflict, these ideas realise their ends in and through conflict. The scientific form which it assumes in the hypothesis of evolution is but the pragmatic expression of this mystery. Here is the metaphysical basis of the Law of Tragedy, the profoundest law in human life, in human art, in human action. And thus that law, which, as I pointed out, throws a vivid light upon the first essential transformation in the life-history of a State dowered with empire, offers us its aid in interpreting the last transformation of all.

The higher freedom of man in the world of action, and reverie in the domain of thought, are but two aspects of the idea which Imperial Britain incarnates, just as Greek freedom and beauty were aspects of the idea incarnate in Hellas.

The spaces of the past are strewn with the

wrecks of dead empires, as the abysses where the stars wander are strewn with the dust of vanished systems, sunk without a sound in the havoc of the æons. But the Divine presses on to ever deeper realisations, alike through vanished races and through vanished universes.

Britain is laying the foundations of States unborn, civilisations undreamed till now, as Rome in the days of Tacitus was laying the foundations of States and civilisations unknown, and by him darkly imagined. For Justice men turn to the State in which Justice has no altar, Freedom no temple; but a higher than Justice, and a greater than Freedom, has in that State its everlasting seat. Throughout her bounds, in the city or on the open plain, in the forest or in the village, under the tropic or in the frozen zone, her subjects shall find Justice and Freedom as the liberal air, so that enfranchised thus, and the unfettered use of all his faculties secured, each may fulfil his being's supreme law.

The highest-mounted thought, the soul's complete attainment, like the summits of the hills, can be the possession only of the few, but the paths that lead thither, this empire shall open to the daring climber. Humanity

has left the Calvinist and Jacobin behind. And thus Britain shall become the name of an ideal as well as the designation of a race, the description of an attitude of mind as well as of traits of blood.

Europe has passed from the conception of an outwardly composed unity of religion and government to the conception of the inner unity which is compatible with outward variations in creeds, in manners, in religions, in social institutions. Harmony, not uniformity, is Nature's end.

Dante, as the years advanced and the poet within him thrust aside the Ghibelline politician, the author of the *De Monarchia*, discerned this ever more clearly. Contemplating the empires of the past, he felt the Divine mystery there incarnate as profoundly as Polybius. In the fourteenth century he dares to see in the Roman people a race not less divinely missioned than the Hebrew. Though contemporary of the generation whose fathers had seen the Inquisition founded, yet like an Arab *soufi*, Dante, the poet of mediævalism, points to the spot of light far-off, insufferably radiant, yet infinitely minute, the source and centre of all faiths, all

creeds, all religions, of this universe itself, and all the desires of men. In an age which silenced the scholastics he founded Hell in the *Ethics* of Aristotle, as on a traced plan, and he who in his childhood had heard the story of the great defeat, and of the last of the crusading kings borne homewards on his bier, dares crest his Paradise with the dearest images of Arab poetry, the loveliness of flame and the sweetness of the rose.

What does this import, unless that already the mutual harmonies of the wide earth and of the stars had touched his listening soul, that already he who stayed to hear Casella sing heard far off a diviner music, the tones of the everlasting symphony played by the great Musician of the World, the chords whereof are the deeds of empires, the achievements of the heroes of humanity, and its most mysterious cadences are the thoughts, the faiths, the loftiest utterances of the mind of man?

And to the present age, what an exhortation is implicit in this thought of Dante's! No unity, no bond amongst men is so strong as that which is based on religion. Patriotism, class prejudices, ties of affection, all break

before its presence. What a light is cast upon the deeper places of the human heart by the history of Jesuitism in the seventeenth century! Genius for religion is rare as other forms of genius are rare, yet both in the life of the individual and of the State its rank is primary. In the soul, religion marks the meridian of the divine. By its remoteness from or nearness to this the value of all else in life is tested. And there is nothing which a race will not more willingly surrender than its religion. The race which changes its religion is either very young, quick to reverence a greater race, and ardent for all experiment, or very old, made indifferent by experience or neglectful by despair.

In the conception at which she has at last arrived, and in her present attitude towards this force, Britain may justly claim to represent humanity. She combines the utmost reverence for her own faith with sympathetic intelligence for the faiths of others. And confronting her at this hour of the world's history is a task higher than the task of Akbar, and more auspicious. Akbar's design was indeed lofty, and worthy of that great spirit; but it was a hopeless design. The forms, the creeds which

have been imposed from without upon a religion are no integral part of that religion's life. Even when by the progress of the years they have become transfused by the formative influences which time and the sufferings or the hopes of men supply, they change or are cast aside without organic convulsion or menace to the life itself. But the forms and embodiments which a divine thought in the process of its own irresistible and mighty growth assumes—these are beyond the touch of outer things, and evade the shaping hand of man. Inseparable from the thought which they, as it were, re-incarnate, their life changes but with its life, and together they recede into the divine whence they came. The effort to extract the inmost truth, tearing away the form which by an obscure yet inviolate process has crystallised around it, is like breaking a statue to discover the loveliness of its loveliness. Akbar would have as quickly reached the creative thought, the *idea* enshrined in the Athênê of Phidias, the immortal cause of its power, by destroying the form, as have severed the divine thought immanent in the Magian or Hindoo faiths from their integral embodiments.

But a greater task awaits Britain. Among the races of the earth whose fate is already dependent, or within a brief period will be dependent upon Europe, what empire is to aid them, moving with nature, to attain that harmony which Dante discerned? What empire, disregarding the mediæval ideal, the effort to impose upon them systems, rites, institutions, creeds, to which they are by nature, by their history, by inherited pride in the traditions of the past, hostile or invincibly opposed, will adventure the new, the loftier enterprise of developing all that is permanent and divine within their own civilisations, institutions, rites, and creeds? Nature and the dead shall lend their unseen but mighty alliance to such purposes! Thus will Britain turn to the uses of humanity the valour or the fortune which has brought the religions of India and the power of Islam beneath her sway.

The continents of the world no longer contain isolated races severed from each other by the barriers of nature, mutual ignorance, or the artifices of man, but vast masses, moving into ever-deepening intimacies, imitations, mutually influenced and influencing. Man grows

conscious to himself as one, and to represent this consciousness on the round earth, as Rome did once represent it on this half the world, to be amongst the races of all the earth what Hildebrand dreamed the Normans might be amongst the nations of Europe, is not this a task exalted enough to quicken the most sluggish zeal, the most retrograde "patriotism"? For without such mediation, misunderstanding, envy, hate, mistrust still erect barriers between the races of mankind more impassable than continents or seas or the great wall of Ch'in Chi. This is a part not for the future merely, it is one to which Britain is already by her past committed. The task is great, for between civilisation and barbarism, the vanguard and the rearguard of humanity, suspicion, rivalry, and war are undying. From this the Greek division of mankind into Hellenes and Barbarians derives whatever justice it possesses.

In those directions and towards those high endeavours amongst the subjects within her own dominion, and thence amongst the races and religions of the world, the short space that is illumined of the path in front of Britain does unmistakably lead. Every year, every month

that passes, is fraught with import of the high and singular destiny which awaits this realm, this empire, and this race. The actions, the purposes of other empires and races, seem but to illustrate the actions, the purposes of this empire, and the distinction of its relations to Humanity.

Faithful to her past, in conflict for this high cause, if Britain fall, it will at least be as that hero of the *Iliad* fell, "doing some memorable thing." Were not this nobler than by overmuch wisdom to incur the taunt, *propter vitam vivendi perdere causas*, or that cast by Dante at him who to fate's summons returned "the great refusal," *a Dio spiacenti ed a'nemici sui*, "hateful to God and to the enemies of God"? The nations of the earth, in envy or antagonism, ponder our action at this crisis, and by our vacillation or resolution they are uplifted or dejected; whilst, in their invisible abodes, the spirits of the dead of our race are in suspense till the hazard be made and the glorious meed be secured, in triumph or defeat, to eternity.

There are crises in history when it is not merely fitting to remember the dead. Their deeds live with us continually, and are not so

much things remembered, as integral parts of our life, moulding the thought of every hour. In such crises a Senate of the dead were the truest counsellors of the living, for they alone could with convincing eloquence plead the cause of the past and of the generations that are not yet. Warriors, crusaders, patriots, statesmen-soldiers or statesmen-martyrs, it was for things which are not yet that they died, and to an end which, though strongly trusting, they but dimly discerned that they laid the foundations of this Empire. Masters of their own fates, possessors of their own lives, they gave them lightly as pledges unredeemed, and for men and things of which they were not masters or possessors. But they set higher store on glory than on life, and valued great deeds above length of days. They loved their country, dying for it, yet did it seem as if it were less for England than for that which is the excellence of man's life and the very emergence of the divine within such life, that they fought and fell. And this great inheritance of fame and of valour is but ours on trust, the fief inalienable of the dead and of the generations to come.

And now, behold from their martyr graves Russell, Sidney, Eliot arise, and with phantom fingers beckon England on! From the fields of their fate and their renown, see Talbot and Falkland, Wolfe and de Montfort arise, regardful of England and her action at this hour. And lo! gathering up from the elder centuries, a sound like a trumpet-call, clear-piercing, far-borne, mystic, ineffable, the call to battle of hosts invisible, the mustering armies of the dead, the great of other wars,—Brunanburh and Senlac, Creçy, Flodden, Blenheim and Trafalgar. *Their* battle-cries await our answer,—the chivalry's at Agincourt, "Heaven for Harry, England and St. George!" Cromwell's war-shout, which was a prayer, at Dunbar, "The Lord of Hosts! The Lord of Hosts!"—these await our answer, that response which by this war we at last send ringing down the ages, "God for Britain, Justice and Freedom to the world!"

Such witness of the dead is both a challenge and a consolation; a challenge, to guard this heritage of the past with the chivalry of the future, nor bate one jot of the ancient spirit

and resolution of our race; a consolation, in the reflection that from a valour at once so remote and so near a degenerate race can hardly spring.

With us, let me repeat, the decision rests, with us and with this generation. Never since on Sinai God spoke in thunder has mandate more imperative been issued to any race, city, or nation than now to this nation and to this people. And, again, if we should hesitate, or if we should decide wrongly, it is not the loss of prestige, it is not the narrowed bounds we have to fear, it is the judgment of the dead and the despair of the living, of the inarticulate myriads who have trusted to us, it is the arraigning eyes of the unborn.

THE END

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